ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1682-1776

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PREFACE

To Rufus Jones, one of the most eminent twentiety-century authorities on Quakerism, the history of the Society of Friends in the eighteenth century was of little interest. In The Later Periods of Quakerism, published in 1921, Jones used the spiritual experiences of the brothers Samuel and Dr. John Fothergill to exemplify "the inner life of Quakerism during the period when it had almost no outer history."[1] For Jones the history of the Society of Friends was an episode in the history of mystical religion, and his attention focused upon the pious and quietistic John Woolman, Thomas Chalkley, Thomas Story, and others. By Jones' study, the lives of these men became the history of the Society, or the absence of it. Jones was not oblivious to the secular life of Friends, but he restricted his inquiry to the Samaritan deeds of Friends who were exemplary because of the richness of their recorded inner life.

In Jones' estimation Quakerism of the seventeenth century had a rich history--remarkable testimonies, proselytism, persecution, and martyrdom--because its events were the obvious complement of the rich inner life of Quaker patriarchs. But the lives of eighteenth-century Friends showed no very obvious link with their inner-state, and the history of the church was accordingly impoverished.

Since 1921 the Quaker narrative has been enriched by expanding the scope of the inquiry: Frederick Tolles has studied the Quaker merchants of Philadelphia; Sydney V. James, Quaker philanthrophy; Theodore Thayer, Quakers and politics; and Thomas Drake, Quakers and

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[1] Rufus M. Jones, Later Periods of Quakerism (London, 1921), I, p. 12.

the abolition of slavery.[2] Contrary to Jones' conclusions, eighteenth-century Quakerism had a rich "outer" history.

Much of the credit for the present scope of Quaker history, and of ecclesiastical history in general, belongs to Ernst Troeltsch, who explained the relationship between the total life of churchmen and the religious doctrine they espoused.[3] According to Troeltsch, the history of a church included the social, economic, and political activities of the members, and their attitude toward other churches and other men. Attitudes toward the world without the sanctuary, in fact, classified the religion espoused within it.

By their focus upon particular aspects of Friends' activities Tolles, James, Thayer, Drake, and others have all contributed to a larger, richer understanding of eighteenth century Quakerism, but, although the more conspicuous public actions of the Society have been illuminated, much less is known about the way in which the Society then regarded the daily activities of its members. Perhaps the best record of the diverse activities of Friends was compiled by the Society itself in its accounts of the disciplinary errors of its constituents. Two hundred years before Troeltsch explained that the conduct of churchmen outside the church was indicative of their religious beliefs, the Society expected that a Friend's professions in the meeting house would be reflected outside of it. Therefore, Friends observed their brethren in their weekday behavior: dress, language, sexual conduct, and education. When the conduct did not harmonize with Quaker ethics, the offending Friend was disowned (separated from fellowship in the Society). The offenders are never described in detail, but the lack of detail in the records is offset by the volume and scope of the offenses.

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[2] Frederick B. Tolles, Meeting House and Counting House (New York, 1948). Sydney B. James, A People Among Peoples (Cambridge, Mass., 1963). Theodore Thayer, Israel Pemberton, King of the Quakers (Phila., 1943). Thomas E. Drake, Quakers and Slavery (New Haven, 1950).

[3] Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches (New York, 1931).

This thesis surveys the disciplinary records of the Monthly Meetings of Friends in colonial Pennsylvania in an attempt to define the conduct that the Society prohibited, the disciplinary errors that Friends committed, the frequency of such errors, and the discipline imposed upon the delinquent persons.[4] The major categories of errors--prohibited marriages, sexual misconduct, drunkenness, for example--are treated separately and their development traced from 1682 to 1776. All the disciplinary actions of Friends in Pennsylvania have been totaled, by Monthly Meetings, and described at five year intervals through the colonial period in order to reveal fluctuations in Quaker behavior and in the enforcement of the discipline. From both the particular categories of errors and the gross behavior of Friends conclusions are drawn regarding the character of the Society of Friends, the changes it underwent, and some reasons for the changes. Strictly defined, this thesis treats the personal conduct of Friends; but because the Society regarded the total life of Friends as properly under its supervision, the thesis also treats such topics as legal disputes, economics, and politics--subjects which churches usually relinquish to the supervision of the state. The ethical concerns of Friends really define the scope of the study and permit the treatment of subjects as diverse as fornication and the French and Indian War. Insofar as the ethical concerns and disciplinary records of the Society include the total behavior of Friends, this study is a history of the Society of Friends.

This information on the ethical behavior of Friends adds little dimension to the inner or mystical life of Friends; yet it rectifies the misconception that Friends passed through life with eyes bowed and fixed upon an interior spirituality. Ironically, Samuel Fothergill, whom Jones cited as an example of the rich inner life which adorned the otherwise arid history of the eighteenth-century Friends, initiated the greatest change in the Quakerism of his day.

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[4] In the footnotes "Monthly Meeting" is abbreviated "MM," and "minutes," "min."

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CHAPTER I

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISCIPLINE

The Disciplinary Procedure

The Society of Friends in colonial Pennsylvania was organized as a pyramid of three strata. At the base of the pyramid were the individual congregations of Friends or meetings for worship. The meetings within one township (usually two or three) comprised a Monthly Meeting, which was the basic meeting for business in the Society. The Monthly Meetings within a county comprised a Quarterly Meeting, the intermediate unit for business; and all the Quarterly Meetings belonged to the Yearly Meeting, the apex of the structure. By 1776 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting contained seven Quarterly Meetings, three of which--Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester--were in Pennsylvania. The disciplinary actions by these three Quarterly Meetings are the subject of this study.[1]

All the meetings for business considered policies, performed

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[1] Throughout the eighteenth century, larger and more vigorous meetings for worship were authorized to conduct a limited amount of business. They might decide minor issues, usually settling differences between Friends. Their primary function was to prepare business for presentation to the Monthly Meeting to expedite its transactions. Therefore, the name given them was "preparative" meetings. They may or may not have kept records, which may or may not have been preserved. Many of the preparative meetings grew into Monthly Meetings, and the records of such preparative meetings are part of the Monthly Meeting records. Pennsylvania Historical Survey, Inventory of Church Archives, Society of Friends in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1941), pp. 7-10 and throughout. Rufus M. Jones, Isaac Sharpless, and Amelia M. Gummere, The Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1923), pp. 534-535. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 21-7-1719.

judicial functions, and transacted financial business. The bulk of all business, except that of making policy, was transacted at the primary level by the Monthly Meetings. Most important, the Monthly Meeting was almost exclusively charged with the supervision of the lives of its members; they apprehended delinquents, disowned incorrigibles, resolved differences between members, and generally ensured that Friends lived according to the professions of their Society. Although the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings could apprehend a delinquent member and pass judgment upon him, they rarely did so, but, instead, heard only the cases that were appealed to them from the judgments of the Monthly Meetings. Few of the judgments of the Monthly Meetings were appealed and reversals of lower decisions are negligible in number. The business of the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings was administration and policy-making and affected the discipline of the Society only when the rules of the discipline were being reconsidered.

The lives of Friends were subject first to the inspection of other members of their own meetings. Outside the Philadelphia area, the meetings for worship and most Monthly Meetings were small; members knew one another. In Philadelphia, by 1760 the membership of the Monthly Meeting had grown to 2,250--twice the size of the next largest Monthly Meeting and at least five times as large as each of the others. When such growth prohibited familiarity among the members and inhibited disciplinary work, the meetings, as in the case of Philadelphia, were divided into smaller ones.[2]

In the 1680's and 1690's a procedure evolved whereby two or more members of each meeting were deputized to pay additional attention to any disorderly Friends.[3] Until some time after the turn of the century, the positions remained informal and appointments irregular. Thereafter, the office was called "overseer" and was continually filled by order of the Monthly Meetings. The Monthly Meetings charged the overseers to "enquire into any disorders, that they may hear of, among

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[2]See tables in Appendix A. Phila. MM min., 25-10-1771.

[3]Jones, p. 534.

any professing Truth and if it seem needful, to desire the assistance of any other friends that they may think fit, and make report of their proceedings to every Monthly Meeting."[4] The charge was expansive; the overseers were free to investigate any apparent commotion within the congregation and to inspect situations where error was only suspected.

In the early eighteenth century, the Society assisted the overseers by urging that certain Friends be appointed to visit all the families within each congregation. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting wrote to all Quarterly Meetings that

> it is the advice of this Meeting to the several Quarterly Meetings, that care may be taken that substantial Friends may be appointed to visit every family amongst us, where they think there is occasion to suspect they are going backward in their worldly estate, and to enquire and see how things are with them, and if they will not take the advice of Friends, then . . . proceed therein against them.[5]

The Yearly and Quarterly Meetings had to remind their subordinates to maintain the practice, and, despite these efforts, it fell into disuse in the 1740's. After 1755, the Yearly Meeting wrote more exhortative epistles to the subordinate meetings and constantly labored to revive the practice; although the Meeting succeeded, the visitors never rivaled the effectiveness of the overseers.[6]

The assistance that the community lent the overseers cannot be ignored. Many of the offenders that the overseers apprehended are the object of community gossip; such offenses as paternity and drunkenness commanded attention. The Society seemed to acknowledge this community assistance when it charged the overseers to "take care, and to enquire into any disorders, that they may hear of."[7] Recorded cases

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[4] Phila. MM min., 27-5-1705.

[5] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1710.

[6] Wrightstown MM min., 2-3-1756. Concord MM min., 4-11-1767. Radnor MM min., 8-2-1771.

[7] Phila. MM min., 27-5-1705.

of courtship and sexual conduct, and of slander, often reveal the enthusiastic assistance of the local gossip.

In the Quaker community of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, faithful Friends could not expect to live with the degree of privacy that is commonplace in the twentieth century. From birth to death the Society observed its members: it registered their births, acknowledging the orthodoxy of their parents; it certified their removal from their parents or community, vouching for the moral quality of their education; it married them, attesting to their purity; and it buried them. J. H. presumed that death severed his brother from the oversight of Friends; he buried his brother without informing his neighbors or Falls Monthly Meeting. R. H. "is dead and buried," said the Meeting, "and few of the neighbours knew of it until it was over. To the end that such things may not be used amongst us, but that the dead may be buried decently, orderly, and publickly, friends have in this meeting unanimously declared their dislike of such clandestine funerals."[8]

Friends were satisfied to live and die under the scrutiny of their coreligionists, for few Friends obstructed the overseers in the performance of their duties. J. W. threatened them with a gun and said he intended to shoot them. D. W. swore he would "get" the overseers who reported him, even if it cost him £10 to learn which ones they were.[9] But these two members were rare exceptions. One can infer that they valued their membership in the Society, even though they retained it on a falsified good record.

When the overseers discovered a minor quarrel or error, they might attempt to settle it themselves. They reconciled one Friend with another, admonished unruly Friends, and, because they eliminated quarrels and errors when the quarrels and errors were yet insignificant, their successes were rarely recorded. If the quarrels permitted

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[8]Falls MM min., 2-8-1689. To prevent identification of the delinquents with their living descendants, only the initials of the former are used in this study.

[9]Chester MM min., 30-11-1715, 26-4-1756.

no easy solution or exceeded the judicial talent of the overseers, if the error was aggravated by the recalcitrance of the delinquent Friend or by his refusal to obey the customary procedures of dealing with his meeting, then the offense and the record of the case was submitted to the Monthly Meeting. If the delinquent had transgressed an article of discipline, or if the overseers suspected a transgression, the overseers reported the accused to the Monthly Meeting. Whether a man was guilty or innocent, penitent or impenitent, his case then became a matter of record. If he were guilty, the Meeting either publicly disowned him or made him publicly condemn his error. A negligible number were charged with delinquency and acquitted.

When a delinquent Friend was reported to a Monthly Meeting, the Meeting appointed several Friends to visit the delinquent to inform him of the allegation against him and to ascertain his disposition. In the great majority of cases it appears that the meeting was already certain of the guilt of the accused before visitors were appointed, and their primary mission was in most instances to learn whether the delinquent was disposed to admit and condemn his breach of discipline or would refuse to condemn it and be disowned. To condemn his breach, he had to prepare a written statement for the Meeting confessing his guilt and attesting to his contrition. He must attend the Monthly Meeting with this paper, and later attend his own meeting for worship when the paper was read to his fellow Friends. If he chose disownment, the Monthly Meeting prepared a statement of his transgressions and a declaration of its disunity with him. A copy was given to him for his inspection. If he made no objection, the statement would be published among Friends. The procedures were strictly observed. In one of the very few cases in which a higher meeting reversed the decision of a Monthly Meeting, Bucks Quarterly Meeting reinstated C. B. because Falls Monthly Meeting did not show him a copy of his disownment before they published it.[10]

Between the alternatives of reinstatement and disownment, the delinquent Friend could always choose disownment, but readmission to

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[10]Falls MM min., 3-12-1730, 7-2-1731, 2-4-1731.

the Society required more than a choice and a confession. The readmission procedure alone might dissuade the sensitive soul from attempting it, for the procedure exposed him and his error to the community. S. P. told Newgarden Monthly Meeting that she would condemn her fornication in writing, but she would not appear at the Meeting in person to condemn her act. The appearance was mandatory; she was disowned.[11] Friends demanded a personal appearance so that they might judge the sincerity of the delinquent who had to prove his contrition and his reformation to the Meeting.[12] For the normally sober Friend who committed an angry or passionate act, proof of one's good character and regret was no obstacle to pardon. For the chronic drunkard, for example, proof of reformation might require years.[13] The surest way to fail the test was to treat the test flippantly. T. V. committed the minor offense of attending a disorderly wedding. If he had acknowledged that he had made a mistake, he would have been pardoned. Instead, he suggested to Uwchlan Monthly Meeting that his was a minor violation and that they ought to ignore it. He was disowned.[14] Friends expected humility in an offender who petitioned for pardon, an awareness that he indeed was a petitioner. When J. K. committed fornication his offense was "much aggrivated by his presuming to preach to others when he was very faulty himself." For his show of pride, Bradford Monthly Meeting disowned him despite his readiness to fulfill its other demands.[15] In hundreds of cases the task of assessing the sincerity of the petitioner was more difficult: did the gestures of the delinquent demonstrate humility? was his confession

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[11] Newgarden MM min., 27-12-1755, 3-4-1756.

[12] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 21-7-1719.

[13] Phila. MM min., 28-1-1757 through 25-1-1760. Sadsbury MM min., 5-9-1759, 7-11-1739.

[14] Uwchlan MM min., 9-12-1773, 10-3-1774.

[15] Bradford MM min., 21-12-1746, 19-1-1747.

declamatory or evasive? how well had he attended meetings for worship?[16]

When the misdeed involved a victim, the meeting had a more substantial means of testing the sincerity of the confessor. He had to satisfy the just demands of the victim and compensate the victim for damages. The contrite confessor would satisfy his victim; the hypocrite might refuse. In 1754 Goshen Monthly Meeting disowned T. P. for alleged fornication with a girl in Virginia. Fourteen years later T. P. condemned his misdeed. Before the Meeting would reinstate T. P., it demanded that he produce a letter from the victim in which she acknowledged that he had satisfied her demands for restitution. When he produced such a letter from her, two years later, Goshen Meeting reinstated him.[17]

By the use of the same tactic, the Society exposed crafty Friends. T. M. had almost succeeded in convincing Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of his remorse for committing fornication and begetting an illegitimate child. After treating with him for six months the Meeting found his confession satisfactory. However, the victim demanded that he marry her. For eleven months the Meeting awaited T. M.'s marriage then threatened him with disownment. He appeared agreeable, he asked forbearance, he expressed his intention to marry. Two months later he was not married, yet the Meeting waited. Two months thereafter he said he intended to comply, but needed some time. A month later he was disowned.[18]

Conversely, a delinquent Friend could not satisfy the Meeting only by making restitution. R. J. fought with a man at a public house. At Goshen Monthly Meeting he produced a paper from the victim explaining that they were reconciled. But Goshen Meeting did not

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[16] Uwchlan MM min., 9-12-1773, 10-3-1774. Abington MM min., 29-10-1753, 25-3-1754. Phila. MM min., 26-1-1753 through 22-2-1754. Middletown MM min., 3-9-1761, 3-12-1761, 4-3-1762, 1-7-1762, 5-8-1762.

[17] Goshen MM min., 20-8-1753, 11-3-1768, 9-11-1770.

[18] Phila. MM min., 27-1-1758, 30-6-1758, 25-5-1759, 31-8-1759, 5-10-1759, 30-11-1759.

believe that R. J. was contrite and disowned him. Friends demanded both contrition and restitution when the misdeed involved a victim.[19]

The work of the Monthly Meetings did not end with the treatment of the delinquent Friend. If the convicted Friend appealed to the Quarterly Meeting, the Monthly Meeting prepared to prosecute him at that higher meeting. If the Friend did not appeal, the Meeting published his disownment; if he had condemned his misdeed, the Meeting published his condemnation. Publication of the papers was as important to the meetings as the treatment of their authors. Friends were anxious that persons inside and outside the Society should recognize the evildoer and the personal nature of his guilt. To acquit the Society, Friends publicized the revelations about the evildoer. The Yearly Meeting ordered that the "condemnation be published . . . in such a manner that it may reach as far and become as publick as the offense hath been. . . ."[20] In one case of disownment, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting explained the policy of the whole Society.

> It being the known concern and care of this meeting that our community as a people professing godliness, may not suffer by the vicious or uncomely practices of any who profess . . . to be of our Society. Therefore when evil reports may be spread concerning any member or such as are reputed to belong to us, our practice hath constantly been in those cases, to make diligent enquiry therein . . . and where guilt appears, our Christian endeavours are used to make the faulty truly sensible thereof . . . whereby they may be induced unfeignedly and without hypocrisy to clear the truth and take the shame, But if through stubbornness . . . that fails . . . such are disowned by us.[21]

The delinquent had been warned that "unless she do something to take the odium off Friends which she by her conduct hath brought upon

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[19]Goshen MM min., 15-10-1759, 21-1-1760, 9-5-1760, 8-4-1763. The standards for pardon varied with the time and the Monthly Meeting. See Appendix B and Radnor and Gwynedd Monthly Meetings therein.

[20]Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 21-7-1719.

[21]Phila. MM min., 28-9-1729.

herself and them," she would be disowned. Her scandalous conduct was never specified. Middletown Monthly Meeting worried because J. S.'s drunkenness had "exposed himself to that degree that this meeting thinks themselves under a necessity to take notice thereof."[22] The anxiety of Friends over the publicity that a misdeed received sometimes influenced their decision about the evildoer. Z. G. had committed fornication. Wrightstown Monthly Meeting recorded that

> he thought that he was not in a proper condition to satisfy Friends but that if they would wait sometime with him he was in hopes he would be enabled to do something . . . but . . . we believe the reputation of the society will suffer through delay of publishing our disunity with such practices. . . .[23]

To publish the papers, Friends would read the disownment or condemnation in the meeting for worship to which the delinquent belonged. Thereafter, the procedure varied. It commonly involved posting the paper on the door of the meetinghouse or in the public market place.[24] If a specific group of people had observed the offense, a Friend read the paper to them. If the offense occurred in a particular location, the paper was posted there. Exeter Monthly Meeting read S. W.'s condemnation at the tavern where he became drunk. When R. M. got drunk at S. H.'s house, Newgarden Monthly Meeting ordered that R. M.'s paper be read there, and that R. M. be present when it was read.[25] For extraordinary offenses or delinquents, the papers were given extraordinary circulation. In 1706 Edward Shippen married his third wife in a manner contrary to the discipline of the Society. Shippen was one of the wealthiest merchants of provincial

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[22]Middletown MM min., 7-2-1726.

[23]Wrightstown MM min., 4-9-1764, 4-4-1769. Four years later he was readmitted to membership.

[24]Phila. MM min., 29-8-1697, 29-9-1706. Jones, p. 551.

[25]Exeter MM min., 25-11-1756. Newgarden MM min., 29-5-1727.

Pennsylvania, had been mayor of Philadelphia, onetime speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, president of the Provincial Council, justice of the supreme court, and acting governor of the province.[26] He condemned his irregular marriage and heeded the customary procedure of standing in first day meeting when his paper was read to the assembled Friends. However, Shippen's renown extended beyond Philadelphia Friends. To clear the Society of the reproach he had brought upon it, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting sent copies of his paper of condemnation to New England, Long Island, New Jersey, Maryland, Barbados, London, and Antigua.[27]

In 1738 Benjamin Lay committed an extraordinary offense against the Yearly Meeting. Lay was one of the early anti-slavery advocates of the eighteenth century. Because his advocacy preceded that of his fellow Quakers by twenty years, his counsel was not respected by the Society. He produced a book attacking slavery and Quaker slaveholders, and denying their compatibility with Christianity. Furthermore, he claimed that he had written at the behest of Friends. Lay's public challenge forced the Yearly Meeting to notice him: Friends published their grievances with other Friends at peril of disownment from the Society. But Lay did not repent. When he attended the Yearly Meeting session he brought with him a hollow book containing a bladder filled with simulated blood. He rose in the meeting, denounced the Quaker slaveholders, drew a sword from under his overcoat and thrust it through the book and bladder, dripping "blood" on nearby Friends. For his extraordinary performance, the Yearly Meeting disowned him. Then the Meeting announced to the inhabitants of Philadelphia that Friends had not authorized his book, did not agree with its contents, and were not responsible for his conduct. The clerk of Yearly Meeting, John Kinsey, published the announcements and the notice of Lay's disownment

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[26] Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1935), XVIII, 115-116.

[27] Phila. MM min., 25-8-1706 through 28-1-1707.

in the American Weekly Mercury and the Pennsylvania Gazette.[28]

When Friends were satisfied that the papers were adequately published and that "Truth" was free from reproach, the disciplinary procedure was ended. If it had ended in disownment, the disowned person, after a period of time long enough to permit him to understand his guilt and show genuine contrition, could petition the meeting for reinstatement. Petitioning immediately after disownment could indicate only the same callous selfishness that had caused disownment. The normal period of disunion for those who were reinstated was a year or longer; some returned fifteen to twenty years after disownment.[29] Nevertheless, within any category of offenses, one finds disowned Friends who were later readmitted. Disownment was never final; there was no kind of behavior or belief which Friends never forgave. The Society practiced the same concern that William Penn attributed to God: "Nor can we fall below the Arms of God, how low soever it be we fall."[30]

Certification of Membership

William Penn, Governor of Pennsylvania, attended Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in the sixth month, 1684. The clerk recorded that "his departure for England drawing nigh, he moves the Meeting to give him a certificate as touching his demeanour amongst the people of his Province."[31] After the Meeting had inquired into Penn's conduct and found that he had not transgressed the discipline, it drafted a letter testifying that his conduct had been unspotted and therefore directing

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[28]Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 16-7-1738. Thomas E. Drake, Quakers and Slavery in America (New Haven, 1950), pp. 43-46.

[29]Phila. MM min., 25-7-1730. Abington MM min., 29-9-1755. Goshen MM min., 20-6-1744. Darby MM min., 4-4-1718. Goshen MM min., 18-3-1749.

[30]William Penn, Some Fruits of Solitude (New York, 1903), p. 19.

[31]Phila. MM min., 5-6-1684. See also Falls MM min., 1-8-1701.

any meeting to which Penn delivered the certificate to receive him into its fellowship. This practice was routine, although this example is not. Any Friend who moved away from his Monthly Meeting had to take with him proof of his membership and good conduct, and had to deliver the proof to the Monthly Meeting at his destination. Even if the Friend were only traveling, and not emigrating, he still had to take along the certificate. Thousands of Friends requested certificates thousands of which were drafted by Monthly Meetings. Although the procedure was annoying for the traveler and tedious for the Monthly Meetings, Friends believed that the utility of the practice justified the effort. The practice served the self-evident purpose of informing the Society about the history, residence, and travels of its members. But equally important, it assisted the Society in enforcing all of its rules of discipline. The preservation of the practice was as important as the preservation of any rule of the Society.

A Friend who planned to leave the purview of his Monthly Meeting had to visit that Meeting and inform it of his plans. He would ask the Meeting to inspect his conduct and certify his good standing to the meetings that he would attend in his travels. The Monthly Meeting then asked the petitioner to specify the reasons for his departure and the route of his journey. He had to justify his trip and to assure Friends that his itinerary would not lead him from the oversight of the Society. His route must take him to other communities of Friends. If he intended to emigrate he had to specify the Monthly Meeting that he would join at his destination. The requirements were relaxed for a few Friends--Quaker sea captains could not visit meetings during their long voyages--but most peripatetic Friends had to visit other meetings on journeys in the American colonies, Great Britain, and the British colonies.

If the Monthly Meeting approved of the petitioner's plans, it inspected his record and conduct. No delinquent was permitted to depart. Few delinquents presumed to ask. The meeting inspected persons of apparent good conduct to unearth any delinquency that previously had gone undisclosed. If a delinquent Friend escaped its oversight, the delinquency might never be discovered. If the delinquency were discovered after the Friend's departure, the delinquent Friend

might never be apprehended. The Monthly Meeting desired that anyone, Friend or not, who had a grievance against the petitioner might bring it to the attention of the Meeting. Certain grievances, such as debts, might not merit attention, or might not become grievances until the aggrieved party learned that the offender planned to leave the community. If the terms of a debt were not specified, the creditor might not be certain when a debtor became delinquent in repaying the debt. In the Society of Friends a creditor had to be wary of taking premature action against a debtor Friend; Friend did not prosecute Friend. Yet when a debtor prepared to leave the Monthly Meeting's district, the Meeting strongly suspected that he intended to defraud his creditors. For like reasons, the meetings searched any "unsettled affairs" and other suspicious conduct. If they uncovered anything reprehensible, they enjoined the departure of the delinquent Friend.[32]

Friends who received certificates of removal had to present them promptly to the meetings addressed in the certificates. Except for the time when the certificates were in transit, they were to remain in the custody of the meetings. The emigrant Friend permanently surrendered his certificate at his destination. The peripatetic Friend asked the meetings he visited to endorse his original certificate. If he resided in a Quaker community for an extended period of time, the meeting there gave him a certificate to return to his home meeting.

Thousands of Friends obediently followed this procedure when they traveled. The Society knew where they traveled, when they traveled, and why they traveled. A few Friends disobeyed the procedure and were found delinquent. Their histories reveal the second rationale behind the system.

In petitioning for certificates, some Friends were refused and others were cautioned about their inadequate reasons for travelling. M. P. told Abington Monthly Meeting that she expected to go to Virginia to be employed as a nurse to a family there. But the family was not Quaker, and Abington Meeting would not permit her to live in a non-

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[32] See Chapter VIII.

Quaker household. She dropped her petition.[33] Anthony Benezet and other Friends found that a Quakeress who wished to undertake a missionary journey to England, misunderstood her duty. Benezet wrote to her husband:

> . . . we must declare our dislike and our disunion with her intended voyage. It is certainly her duty to take care and watch over the children God has given her. Whether it is her duty to leave them and go abroad, must certainly be a matter of grave doubt, even with her. Let people say what they will none are so proper to watch over the wants and weaknesses of children, as their own mother. We do not believe that any service, civil or religious, calls her to leave her tender children, and cross the seas. We look upon it rather as a snare, and suggestion of the enemy of her soul, who would keep her busy, and employed in other men's vineyards, while her own remains uncultivated. . . .[34]

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting did not permit S. F. to leave until he condemned his "extraordinary powdering of his perriwig which is the chief thing friends had against him. . . ."[35]

However, meetings rarely objected to a member's plans so long as the emigrant moved to another Monthly Meeting district. J. P. informed Goshen Monthly Meeting that he planned to emigrate to a place in South Carolina 150 miles northwest of Charleston. He alleged that a Monthly Meeting called Bush Creek existed in that location, to which Goshen Meeting should address his certificate. But the members at Goshen had never heard of Bush Creek Meeting and were not willing to certify J. P.'s removal there until they were certain of its existence. J. P. left anyway. Goshen did not regard his action in contempt, but awaited further information to dispel its own uncertainty.

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[33] Abington MM min., 21-1-1762.

[34] George S. Brookes, Friend Anthony Benezet (Philadelphia, 1937), pp. 207-208.

[35] Phila. MM min., 25-5-1701.

Six years later the Meeting became satisfied of Bush Creek's existence and sent a certificate for J. P. Other Friends departed more hastily and disorderly. S. D. left Philadelphia without informing the Monthly Meeting and while he was in debt. An inquiry showed that he had left property to cover his debts and had not intended to defraud his creditors. Four months later he wrote to the Meeting from Jamaica. He acknowledged that he had expected Friends to enjoin his removal to Jamaica, so that he had left clandestinely. However, he requested their indulgence with his move because he promised to obey the discipline while in Jamaica. But Philadelphia Monthly Meeting was anxious about S. D.'s conduct. In Jamaica he was far from Friends; in Jamaica "temptations to evil prevail." They counselled him to return. He did not. His refusal was in contempt of good order and the Meeting disowned him. The Society thought itself capable of judging the "suitable and reputable" place for a Friend to live.[36]

The Friends most frequently enjoined from leaving were debtors. The Society demanded that before they could leave the vicinity of their meetings they had to repay their creditors or give up their property. Few of them repaid their debts or remained in the vicinity; they absconded. The crafty debtor with fraud in mind never requested a certificate, for his request forewarned his creditors who could prepare to distrain his property at his first indication of flight. In such cases, he stealthily departed with his movable goods.[37]

Not just creditors, but anyone could complain against a petitioner. A Bucks County woman prevented the departure of R. W. when she made certain allegations about his actions, allegations that she could not entirely prove. The Meeting demanded that he confess that he had persuaded her "to drink rum to disorder her," whatever his motive may have been. He confessed and received a certificate.[38]

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[36]Goshen MM min., 5-12-1766, 10-4-1772. Phila. MM min., 4-10-1770, 26-10-1770, 29-3-1771, 2-1-1772, 31-1-1772. Gwynedd MM min., 28-4-1761.

[37]Abington MM min., 29-7-1754. Richland MM min., 19-6-1766, 21-1-1768.

[38]Phila. MM min., 28-8-1709, 25-5-1709.

Some Friends clandestinely moved away from the Monthly Meeting district for no apparent reason. No one complained about them; they had committed no known offenses, nor were any subsequently discovered. Whatever their motive, a silent withdrawal from the oversight of the meeting was an offense.[39]

Vacancies in the ranks of the members quickly exposed the Friends who left the area of their Monthly Meetings without a certificate of removal. When a Friend received a certificate from his meeting and then misused the certificate or committed an offense, he was far more difficult to apprehend. Upon receipt of the certificate he was outside the purview of one Monthly Meeting and not yet within the purview of the intended meeting. It was an unusual period of freedom for a Friend--a temptation to break the discipline and not be observed. To spare the transient Friend some of the temptation, the meetings checked his freedom by specifying his destination and limiting his travel time. When T. S. brought his certificate to his destination, Middletown Monthly Meeting, the Friends there observed that it was dated a long time past. T. S. had to explain to the Meeting the reason for the delay, and to confess certain "loose" behavior in the interim. I. E. delayed five months in presenting his certificate to Abington Monthly Meeting. When asked to justify his delay, he explained that he had been engaged in military service! If a Friend had no permanent destination but was continually traveling, he had to return his certificate to his home meeting bearing the endorsement of several meetings he had visited en route. H. M. had to explain to Falls Monthly Meeting that his trip was too brief to permit him to attend any meetings and return with endorsements. T. S. said that he was sick and could not attend a meeting while he was in the Carolinas. Both explanations were accepted.[40]

The delinquents most difficult to apprehend were the Friends who

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[39] Goshen MM min., 7-6-1765, 11-10-1765. Abington MM min., 26-7-1756, 29-1-1759. Concord MM min., 5-2-1766.

[40] Middletown MM min., 5-1-1724. Abington MM min., 25-12-1775, 29-1-1776, 26-2-1776, 26-8-1776, 30-9-1776. Falls MM min., 2-4-1760. Wrightstown MM min., 6-10-1767.

did not relinquish their certificates to their intended meetings. Since the transient Friend was the sole messenger, the recipient meeting had no independent knowledge that a certificate was in transit and might be overdue. Coincidental correspondence might inform the recipient meetings that certificates were in transit and to be anticipated. Since most Friends traveled within sixty miles of Philadelphia, where correspondence was frequent, the delay of a certificate might be quickly perceived at its terminal meeting. Bradford Monthly Meeting noticed a delay in a certificate from Concord Monthly Meeting, only some twenty-five miles away. Middletown Monthly Meeting found that J. W. had not relinquished his certificate from Abington Monthly Meeting, some fifteen miles away. In the interim, J. W. had been drunk and had acted unbecomingly with a woman. It is far more surprising to find that Philadelphia Monthly Meeting knew that P. P. had not delivered his certificate to the Friends in Barbados. The Barbadian Friends subsequently learned that P. P. had been privateering and had married a girl who was not a Friend. Within eighteen months of the date that it gave T. P. a certificate, Goshen Monthly Meeting learned that he had not delivered it to North Carolina Friends and that he had committed fornication in Virginia. The oversight of a Monthly Meeting did not halt at its borders, but extended as far as Friend could communicate with Friend.[41]

The Friends who were caught delaying their certificates had obvious motives; they broke a rule when they expected to escape observation, discipline, and disownment. Some Friends, for no discernible reasons, refused to surrender their certificates even after the meetings demanded them. The premise of such a crafty Friend appears to have been that while he had the certificate he could violate the rules yet appear to be an obedient Friend. But if he were caught

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[41] Concord MM min., 5-12-1764, 6-3-1765, 3-4-1765. Abington MM min., 27-12-1773, 28-2-1774, 21-3-1774. Phila. MM min., 29-2-1760. Goshen MM min., 20-8-1753, 10-9-1753, 17-6-1754. Phila. MM min., 2-4-1772, 27-5-1774, 29-7-1774. Phila. Quarterly Meeting min., 3-7-1687. Phila. MM min., 29-1-1768, 25-11-1768, 30-6-1769, 25-5-1769.

delaying his certificate and prolonging his freedom, he lost part of his objective--his good reputation. The Friend who bluntly refused to surrender his certificate would forfeit his membership, the very thing he sought to preserve.

Any Friend who moved to a new Monthly Meeting and resided there for longer than several months had to relinquish his certificate in order to receive the privileges and fellowship of that community of Friends. Without that certificate a new arrival could not be regarded as a Friend. When J. L. came from England to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting without a certificate he presumed to preach and pray in meeting. He was cautioned and asked to produce his certificate. He had none. Yet in succeeding months he began preaching again. Since he was not a member, the Meeting could not disown him. Instead, it testified against him as an imposter. W. K. likewise presumed to preach in Falls Monthly Meeting district. In his case Falls refused to regard him as a member until it learned from his previous meeting that he was in good standing there.[42] In a few cases, orderly Friends were themselves embarrassed because they inadvertently lacked a certificate. In 1738 Thomas Chalkley, one of the greatest Quaker ministers, set out to visit Friends in North Carolina, but neglected to take a certificate. Despite his exemplary record, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting reprimanded him. M. C., who was a Friend, was embarrassed by her husband, who was not, when they moved to Delaware. Her certificate "unhappily getting into the hands of her husband, could by no means be obtain'd from him again, who it seems was pleased with that opportunity of gratifying his evil and malicious disposition against Friends."[43]

Although the fraud involved in the miscarriage of most certificates was elementary, since the certificates were documents which conferred privileges, they, like similar legal documents, were susceptible to forgery and other sophisticated misuse. Soon after Wrightstown Monthly Meeting had pardoned P. C. for drunkenness and debt, it

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[42] Phila. MM min., 24-9-1721, 31-6-1722. Falls MM min., 5-8-1720, 2-9-1720.

[43] Phila. MM min., 29-7-1738. Richland MM min., 20-12-1764.

gave him a certificate to move to Philadelphia. He interlined the certificate so that it included his wife and requested the charity of Philadelphia Friends for both of them. W. H. "craftily obtained a certificate to Friends in London" by having several unauthorized Chester County Friends sign it. A more serious fraud was attempted by T. S., who had been convicted of bribery and exposed to persons living near Fallsington, in Bucks County. T. S. forged a certificate which Falls Monthly Meeting strongly suspected he would use to ingratiate himself with Friends elsewhere. Since membership in good standing carried with it an assumption of the honesty of the member, T. S. could gain the confidence of some trusting Friends, then defraud them.[44]

Better than any other examples of discipline, the disownment of Friends who absconded the Monthly Meeting for undisclosed reasons suggests part of the rationale behind the certification of transient Friends. To the non-Quaker, those disownments occurred without substantial moral reason, yet Friends according to their own lights, acted justly.

What might a Monthly Meeting deduce about an absconded Friend? All Friends who intended to leave their Monthly Meeting districts had to undergo the inspection of their conduct and affairs. If a Friend departed without a certificate, the Meeting might well presume that he feared the inspection and was hiding some error. He would be disowned, of course. But disownment, although regrettable, was better than losing one's property to creditors, marrying the mother of one's illegitimate child, being imprisoned, or suffering punishment for many public crimes. A nervous Friend who fled from a freshly committed public crime might not stop for a certificate of removal; if a Friend had long hidden a crime, he might fear the day when he moved and routinely had to ask Friends to inspect his past.

If the Friend had not committed a public crime but had only violated the discipline, he could receive no punishment greater than dis-

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[44] Chester Quarterly Meeting min., 13-9-1732. Wrightstown MM min., 6-7-1743, 6-9-1744, 7-3-1745. Falls MM min., 4-4-1759, 4-7-1759. Tolles, Meeting House, pp. 59-60.

owmment from the Society. On the other hand, if he confessed his violation of the discipline he might be reinstated. By prescribing the maximum punishment, the Society created a system that destroyed the inducement to flee, if a Friend valued his membership. The system might even induce the delinquent to confess his transgression. As for those who did not value their memberships, the Society did not want them. Apathy was not welcome in a voluntary religious community. In short, if Friends absconded to hide a crime they deserved to be disowned; if they absconded at peril of disownment, they did not value their membership, and they too had to forfeit it. Only those sincerely convinced of Quaker principles remained.

The practice of certifying members was well adapted to the historical situation of Friends, to their mobility, and to their religious beliefs. Any organization that attempts to regulate the conduct of its constituents, or even to inquire into their conduct, has perforce the power to command their attention. Churches have occasionally possessed such power or shared it with the state, but no church in provincial Pennsylvania could employ the powers of the state to discipline its members.

The lack of power did not disable the Society of Friends, for they had never held it, as had the Presbyterians. Doctrinally, they did not desire power, as did the Church of England. They were a voluntary community of believers who disdained the use of power to persuade unbelievers or regulate converts. In this respect Friends resembled the anabaptist communities which arose earlier on the European continent, some of whom--Mennonites, Moravians, and Schwenkfelders--immigrated to Pennsylvania. Friends obeyed because their faith and belief impelled them to obey. Their community was the faithful; the unfaithful were by definition not of the community. Friends used certificates not to force a member to remain within the community, but to disclose the man who withdrew from it.

The discipline expressed the nature of the Society of Friends: a select, redeemed religious community with a perfectionist impulse, highly conscious of its uniqueness and difference from the society in which it existed; the discipline also revealed the dilemmas inherent in such a community. The errors of Friends defeated the mundane purpose

of the Society and denied its professions before the unconverted world; error also should have disclosed the offender as one of the unredeemed. In practice, however, the offender's soul and his error were not always indistinguishably sinful, nor was the Society's interest in a man's behavior always complemented by an equal interest in his soul. In cases of "scandalous" conduct, such as fornication, the desire to dissociate the offender from the unspotted community of Friends abbreviated the inspection of his soul; in cases which caused a protracted inconvenience for the community, such as marriage to a non-Friend, concern for the community eliminated the inspection. Rehabilitation of offenders, although evident in some cases of drunkenness, was ignored in the haste to disown many of them. Punishment or retributive justice was not the object of the discipline, for the extent of Friends' censure was disownment. Although disownment caused some outcast Friends to grieve, it also relieved an offender of as many duties as it denied him privileges. The purpose of the discipline varied; nevertheless, it was basically intended to sift the community of Friends and separate the unfaithful from it, thereby guarding its purity even while strengthening the faith of its members.

CHAPTER II

THE QUAKER FAMILY

Marriage

In the Society of Friends each family practically amounted to a smaller meeting below the preparative or the Monthly Meeting, inculcating the ideals of Friends in faith and conduct and observing the fulfillment or breach of those ideals. The Monthly Meeting observed the families in the performance of their duties just as the Quarterly Meetings observed the Monthly. First, the Monthly Meetings inspected engagements and certified marriages, then it admitted and recorded the children of these Friends, and finally, it buried them. Also, the Monthly Meeting regularly appointed visitors to encourage parents in the performance of their duties and to look into the homes and observe the results. When Friends found that delinquency was increasing throughout their community, they frequently laid the blame upon the family.

The concern that Friends showed for the family began at marriage. Almost one-half of the disciplinary actions taken by Friends in colonial Pennsylvania were directed against members who had courted or married contrary to the discipline of the Society. These delinquents comprised only a small fraction of all the Friends who married. The Society supervised all the orderly marriages and disciplined the Friends involved in disorderly ceremonies. The amount of time and attention required to oversee orderly and disorderly marriages exceeded that required by any other function that the Society performed. The extent and constancy of the effort reveals the Society's concern for

the family.[1]

The correct order of marriage involved many procedures and prohibitions whose multiplicity conveys the importance of that order. Because the Society was an endogamous community, the first and most important demand was that Friends marry other Friends. In an early minute seventeenth-century Friends explained the prohibition in a show of biblicism:

> And also the Lord saith thou shalt not marry the people of other nations of the heathens or of other religions nor to give thy sons and daughters to them so such marriages as those are forbidden by the voice of God from Heaven and by his law and by his gospel which saith that a believer is not to be yoked by an unbeliever for there is no true fellowship for to marry a believer with an unbeliever is to follow strange flesh and join with the uncircumsised that must go down into the pit.[2]

To the biblical injunction eighteenth-century Friends added pragmatic reasons for prohibiting exogamous marriages. In the later generation, when weighty Friends observed that irregular marriages were increasing and that Monthly Meetings were not prosecuting delinquents with the old zeal, they remarked that these delinquent marriages have been "matters of great trouble to Friends, but likewise introductive of many inconveniences, tending to promote libertinism, and a manifest deviation from the purity of our profession. . . ."[3] In a mixed marriage the observance of the discipline of the Society was not as faithful as it was when two Quaker partners reinforced each other's consciences. Common Christian moral standards might be maintained in a mixed marriage or household, but the plain speech and dress, and other peculiarities of Friends might obtrude when one parent taught them and the other contradicted them; Quaker households perpetuated Quaker customs. The perpetuation of the ethics, the piety, and the Society itself demanded that Friends marry Friends.

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[1] See Appendix B.

[2] Middletown MM min., 7-6-1690.

[3] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 1-10-1772.

If a Monthly Meeting observed a courtship between a Friend and a non-Friend, it would warn the Friend of the consequences of an irregular marriage. The attentions paid by a Friend to a non-Friend were not of themselves reprehensible, so that if the Friend ended the courtship, he did not have to make any acknowledgment to the Meeting. However, if the Friend proceeded to marry, he or she would probably be disowned. In 1722 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ordered that thereafter any Friend who had been warned and yet married a non-Friend, or breached the marriage discipline in any way, was to be disowned without consultation or delay. Although few offenders were forewarned, they were quickly disowned after 1722.[4]

After a Friend had eliminated all non-Friends from consideration for courtship, he had to eliminate all the Friends embraced by the Society's prohibition of incest. Ordinarily, that prohibition would have created a problem for neither the suitor nor the Society. The congregational churches of Massachusetts, for example, by defining the prohibited degrees more narrowly, largely eliminated the possibility that marriage would involve an incestuous relationship. Friends defined the incestuous relationship more extensively and thus increased the dimensions of their disciplinary problem. Friends prohibited marriage between persons related as distantly as second cousin, also marriage with aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, with the spouse of one's deceased siblings, and the siblings of one's deceased spouse. The most novel and controversial prohibition passed by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting stated that

> as a man is forbidden to marry any that is near of kin to himself by blood, so is he in like manner and in like degree forbidden to marry any that is near of kin to his deceased wife by blood . . . since he having by marrying her made her one flesh with himself, the remainder of her flesh is the remainder of his flesh. . . .[5]

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[4] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1722.

[5] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 15-9-1753. Emil Oberholzer, Jr., Delinquent Saints (New York, 1956), p. 113.

This prohibition was extended until it ultimately forbade marriage with the second cousin of one's former spouse! It raised many objections. Within seven years, five Monthly and Quarterly Meetings protested the prohibition to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting but on all occasions the Yearly Meeting reaffirmed the prohibition.[6]

If a Friend had a fiancé who satisfied the Society's qualifications, he or she informed the Monthly Meeting of the engagement. (No Friend who intended a prohibited union presumed to ask the Society to solemnize it.) The marriage had to be solemnized by the Society; no minister or civil magistrate could officiate. If the marriages of all Friends were under the care of the Society, Friends could be certain that all couples had been inspected by the Society and had fulfilled all the requirements of the discipline. A Quaker couple who had married outside the Society might have fulfilled all the requirements for marriage within the Society, but Friends could not be sure that they had unless the couple did, in fact, marry within the Society.[7]

When the Monthly Meeting learned of the engagement it appointed a committee to investigate the past conduct of both candidates and learn their qualifications for marriage.[8] The committee could object to any reprehensible conduct in the past of either candidate. For example, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting denied J. W. permission to marry because it learned that two years earlier he had been suspected of fornication.[9] But the committee usually confined its inquiry to the engagement and courtship. D. D. could not marry because her fiancé was a bound servant forbidden to marry. Candidates had to be free

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[6]Abington MM min., 25-5-1748. Middletown MM min., 7-6-1753, 2-8-1753. Falls MM min., 5-12-1753, 3-7-1754. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 16-7-1749, 19-9-1754.

[7]Friends believed in a lay ministry. When Friends patronized these "priests," as Friends termed all ordained ministers, by having them solemnize a marriage, the Friends involved violated the duty of all Quakers to witness against an ordained ministry. Phila. MM min., 5-3-1772.

[8]Falls MM min., 3-2-1706.

[9]Phila. MM min., 27-5-1763, 24-6-1763. Middletown MM min., 5-2-1705, 3-3-1705.

from any previous engagements and commitments. Friends interpreted "engagement" liberally: before T. P., Jr., could marry in Philadelphia, he had to acknowledge his acquaintance with a young woman in Boston "and condemn his imprudent conduct in frequenting her company and with a show of kindness which is contrary to the established discipline . . . [and to the] truth that admits of no insincerity." Neither could a Friend pay attention to any single woman other than his fiancée after his engagement.[10] Courtships had to demonstrate the standards of propriety and decorum that Friends demanded in any relations between sexes. Promiscuous conduct by either fiancé would prevent the solemnization of a marriage. One "indiscreet" young Quakeress erred "By countenancing the visits, company and addresses of a very young man in the way of courtship it being untimely, unseemly, and of no good report." Her reportedly "gross" conduct ended that courtship.[11]

If a blithe young man had courted precipitantly he might have disobeyed another rule: "no man according to the ancient order among friends is to speak to any young woman upon the account of marriage before he speak to the father, guardians, trustees, or executors and have their consent so to do, for Abraham's servants spoke to the parents of the young woman that was to marry Issac concerning marriage before he spoke to her."[12] Consequently, some Friends had to condemn "taking the liberty to tell the young woman his mind in . . . [marriage] before he had the consent of her parents" or "letting loose their affections to one another before a timely permission from parents and relations." One man was disowned because he became violent with his fiancée's parents when they refused him their permission. He then married their daughter outside of the Society. The support that the Society lent to the authority of the parents could inflict unreason-

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[10]Goshen MM min., 15-10-1753. Falls MM min., 1-3-1689. Phila. MM min., 30-10-1715, 24-12-1715. Darby MM min., 2-3-1716.

[11]Abington MM min., 26-11-1753, 31-12-1753, 27-5-1754.

[12]Middletown MM min., 7-6-1690.

able demands upon the children. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting demanded that S. M. produce his father's consent even though S. M.'s father was in Scotland and had ignored his son for twelve years. After S. M. explained his circumstances, the Meeting permitted him to marry, but nevertheless made him acknowledge a lack of care and respect for orderly procedure. Dozens of couples could not obtain their parents' consent, married outside the Society, and were disowned.[13]

The Society did attempt to check parents' arbitrary use of their authority; Friends did not support the refusals of the parents solely because it was parents who refused. Parenthood was an office of discipline and the authority of the office depended upon its use in accordance with the Friends' discipline. When parents could not justify their refusals for reasons that Friends understood, the parents were bypassed and the marriage proceeded. Some parents jeopardized their own good record and membership by arbitrary refusals. J. H.'s refusal to permit his daughter to marry was "trifling and culpable," "tending to divert his children from the observation of the good order of the discipline." The Meeting asked him to attend it and condemn his imprudence. When Concord Monthly Meeting asked J. T.'s father to attend and explain his refusal, he replied that the Meeting was "dirt under his feet and that if it were but two steps to the meeting house he would not come."[14]

Friends petitioning to remarry had to fulfill some additional requirements. The discipline did not recognize divorce; any person whose spouse was alive was still married.[15] To prevent what by Friends' definition was bigamy, the Society demanded that once-married persons prove that they were widowed before the Society would permit them to remarry. T. M. explained that his wife had been absent for

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[13]Gwynedd MM min., 26-1-1723. Newgarden MM min., 19-11-1721. Abington MM min., 27-1-1772. Phila. MM min., 25-8-1758.

[14]Concord MM min., 7-8-1751. Phila. MM min., 30-11-1746. Concord MM min., 8-11-1699, 12-12-1699.

[15]There is no evidence that divorce was at all common in Pennsylvania. The Great Law of 1682 authorized divorce for adultery, but provided no practical means to secure the divorce. George E. Howard, A History of Matrimonial Institutions (Chicago, 1904), II, 385-386.

eight and one-half years and wished to know if he was free to remarry. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting replied that he was not. Friends could demand proof that was all but impossible to obtain; a Philadelphia woman was denied permission because she could not prove the death of her husband who was reported lost at sea fourteen years earlier.[16] Widowed Friends who wished to marry had to wait at least one year after the death of the spouse; for "Whereas some plead for liberty within a year after the death of the wife or the husband. This liberty that is pleaded for is in the flesh and for the flesh and not in the spirit now in Christ," for "Abraham . . . he staid three years after the death of his wife Sarah before he remarried. . . ."[17] Some Friends remarried within three months of the death of their spouses. They and less flagrant offenders were disowned.[18]

One month after informing the Meeting of the engagement, the candidates attended the Meeting to learn if they had passed its scrutiny. If they were approved, the date for their marriage was appointed. At this point, if either fiancé declined to marry, the Meeting regarded him or her as delinquent persons who either had to condemn his error or be disowned. One man pleaded that he declined to marry because his mind was overtaken by "a cloud of distress." Friends found more acceptable the excuse of a girl who objected to her fiancé because he had got drunk. Even if both fiancés amicably declined to marry, they had to exculpate themselves. Declining marriage was an offense whether or not a party to the engagement was aggrieved, which suggests that the Society felt its reputation for piety suffered by such fickleness and needed vindication.[19]

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[16]Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 7-7-1687. Phila. MM min., 25-5-1711.

[17]Middletown MM min., 7-6-1690.

[18]Goshen MM min., 10-1-1772. Chester MM min., 5-4-1733. Newgarden MM min., 2-8-1760.

[19]Exeter MM min., 30-3-1758, 31-8-1758, 29-9-1758. Falls MM min., 3-1-1776. Chester MM min., 24-4-1708. Middletown MM min., 2-11-1689, 7-3-1691, 6-6-1691. Concord MM min., 9-8-1769, 4-10-1769. Darby MM min., 3-12-1741.

If all the participants appeared at the meeting house on the appointed date, the marriage could be solemnized without incident, provided it were "carried on soberly, and that nothing of rudeness or extravagance, or the world's vain customs be made use of."[20] Friends had early noticed that on the occasion of a wedding or a post-wedding celebration, members were extraordinarily tempted to violate the Society's testimony against immodesty, superfluity, and extravagance.[21] On all occasions--births, weddings, receptions, burials--Friends were expected to be sober. To learn if the celebrants were otherwise, the Monthly Meetings began appointing "two weighty friends . . . to see that all things be carried on soberly at weddings and to report any irregularities to the next session of the Monthly Meeting. Weighty Friends reported, for example, that J. B. and W. F. shot off guns at their weddings--"a vain practice." But "upon the strictest enquiry" they concluded that W. F. was not guilty. N. C. got into serious trouble because he and some fellow celebrators waited until the overseers had left before they became disorderly. Late in the eighteenth century, Friends worried because another of the "world's customs" began appearing at Friends' weddings--the use of bridesmaids and groomsmen.[22] If the overseers found everything modest and orderly, they made a good report to the Monthly Meeting and the wedding procedure was complete.

By the dictates of the Society of Friends, complicity in a breach of the discipline was a delinquent act. Friends most frequently assisted, counseled, or condoned their brethren in the violation of the discipline by assisting a Quaker couple to marry contrary to the correct procedure. Assistance in the breach of other articles of

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[20] Phila. MM min., 30-1-1705, 26-10-1690. Darby MM min., 5-3-1696.

[21] The other notable occasion was burials.

[22] Phila. MM min., 30-1-1705. Darby MM min., 1-6-1739, 7-9-1739. Phila. MM min., 26-7-1729, 28-9-1729, 23-12-1732, 30-1-1733. Uwchlan MM min., 10-12-1767. Concord MM min., 6-7-1774.

discipline was almost negligible compared with the assistance lent to irregular marriages.

Because of the parents' preeminent responsibility for the children's education and good conduct, parents were usually the guilt-worthy accomplices to irregular marriages; no child of a pious Quaker household should contemplate breaking the discipline. The error of the parents was that of omission as much as commission; parents must not only refuse any assistance to their delinquent children, but must positively inhibit the children from breaking discipline. In all cases the parents must inform their Monthly Meeting when they suspected that their children were about to marry contrary to parental advice and Friends' discipline. The same duty required that parents who had been silent before their children's irregular marriage explain their silence and their conspicuous lack of concern over the impending delinquency of their children. Squire Boone, father of the illustrious Daniel, had to explain to Exeter Monthly Meeting his responsibility for the irregular marriage of his daughter Sarah:

> Squire declareth, that he was no ways Countenancing or Consenting to the said Marriage; but, confesseth himself in a Fault in keeping them in his House after he knew of their keeping Company, (but that he was in great streight in not knowing what to do, seeing he was somewhat Sensible that they had been too Conversant before) and hopeth to be more careful for the future.

When Squire's son Israel married irregularly five years later, Squire asserted his son's right to marry as he pleased. Exeter disowned Squire, a minister in their Meeting, because it could not "bring him to a sense of his Outgoings" or make him "sensible of his coming to a Godly Sorrow in himself."[23]

Less frequently than parents, Friends outside the family assisted irregular marriages. J. V. condemned his own complicity three different times in ten months. None of his condemnations was accepted and he was disowned. C. P., Sr., lent L. P. a horse to get to his irregular wedding. A complete investigation revealed that C. P. did not know that L. P. was a Friend nor that L. P. would use the horse to get

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[23] Exeter MM min., 26-6-1742, 31-10-1747, 28-11-1747, 26-3-1748.

to his irregular wedding. Concord Monthly Meeting made him draft a paper stating that he should have forbidden L. P. although he was ignorant of L. P.'s membership and intentions.[24]

At its extreme, complicity extended to the attendance of Friends at an irregular marriage. No Friend, even as intimate as father, mother, brother, or sister of the bride or groom, could attend the wedding of a Friend solemnized by a non-Friend. By the absence of any Friends at the irregular wedding ceremony, the Society displayed its antipathy toward the irregularity and created an uncongenial atmosphere for the ceremony that might dissuade potential violators from marrying outside the meeting. Nevertheless, Friends frequently attended proscribed ceremonies of relatives and friends and were apprehended by the Society. The Society treated accomplices leniently and demanded only a cursory self-condemnation in return for pardon. Few who were charged with such violations failed the modest demand. But one Friend who concluded that he could candidly plead the Society's leniency in his defense was disowned.[25] Friends did not appreciate candor when mixed with flippancy.

The Society's demand that its members support the discipline on marriage reveals the priority of the family and the Society in Friends' values. The family was the medium by which the Society's values were transmitted and if the family assisted the transgression of the values, both the family and the Society might suffer. Brother had to condemn assisting a sister's irregular marriage; mother had to condemn attending her son's marriage at the Baptist church. The severest demand made a Friend publicly condemn his or her marriage with a non-Friend: "I gave two much way to my affections suffering it to bow down and settelled on one not in fellowship with friends. . . ."[26]

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[24]Concord MM min., 2-3-1737, 2-11-1737, 6-1-1738, 3-2-1738, 1-3-1738, 9-12-1767, 3-2-1768.

[25]Abington MM min., 29-4-1702. Uwchlan MM min., 9-9-1773, 4-11-1773, 10-3-1774.

[26]Chester MM min., 26-4-1732. The quotations are accurate throughout. The use of "sic" has been avoided.

Such acknowledgments were no great fillips to domestic tranquility. Some Friends condemned their marriages only after their non-Quaker spouses had died.[27] One couple solved the dilemma of either disownment or a distasteful, disruptive condemnation. J. H. was not a Friend; his fiancee was. He petitioned Gwynedd Monthly Meeting for membership, and after instruction, trial, and observation, was admitted. After he married his Quaker fiancée in the Meeting, he disclaimed any belief in Friends' principles or respect for their discipline. He was disowned; his wife was not.[28]

Marital Relations

After the wedding, the Society relaxed its scrutiny of newlyweds. Presumably the extensive precautions preceding the marriage created a household exhibiting piety, love, and humility. The household would occasionally receive visitors appointed by the meetings to observe the state of the household, administer advice, and, if necessary, precaution. But usually, when disharmony or delinquency appeared within the household, the neighbors or the overseers incidentally perceived it.

In the Society of Friends the home was not a man's castle, impervious to scrutiny and criticism by fellow believers. When a home sheltered some disharmony, Friends did not hesitate to interpose between husband and wife, to counsel or reprimand them. When the disharmony was protracted, became public, or involved gross error, Friends aired the controversy in the Monthly Meeting and demanded public acknowledgment by the spouses.

On some occasions both spouses shared the blame for the disharmony: J. C. and his wife cursed each other; L. B. and his wife used "railing words;" J. E. and his wife condemned the "unhappy discord" that occurred between them; J. M. and his wife were disowned for "living in a very disreputable, contentious manner, by indulging them-

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[27] Middletown MM min., 3-12-1731.

[28] Gwynedd MM min., 28-1-1752.

selves in a passionate angry disposition."[29] More often Friends attributed the blame to the husband. R. C. differed with his wife in a reproachful manner. J. T. published a "scandalous" paper against his wife. Several men beat their wives. One case reveals how Friends learned about domestic discord:

> There having been a great discourse in several people's mouths concerning the disorderly behaviour of [J. D. and W. C.] . . . toward their wives, not becoming their profession, the meeting requests [two Friends] . . . to enquire into the truth thereof, and if they see occasion to desire them to come to the next Monthly Meeting.[30]

A few neglectful and aggressive wives were disowned, E. U. for neglecting "a dutiful care and tenderness toward her husband," and A. B. for striking her husband and using "unsavoury" language with him.[31]

When discord separated a spouse from the household, Friends offered the couple two alternatives, reconciliation or disownment. Separation positively breached the marriage covenant and, like divorce, was intolerable.[32] In cases where blame for the separation belonged to only one spouse and the blameworthy spouse refused to cohabit, he or she alone was disowned.[33] If thereafter the disowned spouse refused to cohabit, there was nothing further the Society could do to reunite the couple. The innocent Friend was left without spouse yet could not remarry while the disowned spouse was alive. Some Protestant sects such as the Mennonites required the dissolution of the marriage when

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[29]Concord MM min., 6-12-1756. Falls MM min., 2-5-1684. Phila. MM min., 30-2-1731, 28-1-1757, 19-9-1758.

[30]Chester MM min., 25-11-1771. Concord MM min., 2-10-1745, 3-12-1745. Phila. MM min., 26-1-1753, 29-10-1699. Falls MM min., 5-4-1695. Phila. MM min., 5-5-1690.

[31]Goshen MM min., 20-11-1752, 15-1-1753. Uwchlan MM min., 10-9-1767, 5-11-1767. Abington MM min., 29-4-1776, 24-2-1777, 31-3-1777.

[32]Chester MM min., 27-6-1757.

[33]Darby MM min., 7-7-1743, 5-10-1744. Phila. MM min., 30-3-1735, 25-5-1735. Chester MM min., 30-11-1767, 25-1-1768, 29-2-1768.

one spouse erred and was disowned by the sect. The dissolution of the union created hardship when the error was irrelevant to marital fidelity and the husband and wife still loved each other. But conversely, when the error derived from the incompatibility of the spouses, dissolution of the union provided relief not similarly available to Friends. Puritan theologians recommended and congregational churches provided that the marriage be dissolved for gross infidelity, such as adultery. Friends had created a paradox: infidelity separated a Friend from the Society, yet not from his spouse.[34]

Friends could do little to reconcile a couple separated by an error as great as adultery. But if the barriers to reconciliation were surmountable, Friends would labor months and even years to surmount them. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting helped T. F. to "get a room or two furnished in two or three months time, to receive his wife, if she will then come to dwell with him, and to take off the reproach whereby Truth and friends suffer." The Meeting labored three years before reconciling them.[35]

Although adultery was quite rare the Society guarded against the error, disowning almost all the offenders and arraigning Friends caught in situations that resembled or might induce adultery.[36] It disowned a couple who permitted a man to live in their house, thereby creating some scandal. Upon Friends' demand the man had moved away. Yet he had moved so small a distance that Friends thought the move made no difference. Another couple permitted a man, a Friend, to "lodge in bed with them . . . which probably did excite lust in him to lie with her as appears that he used indeavours to tempt and allude her thereunto by salutations wantonness and unseemly discourses."

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[34]Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches (New York, 1931), p. 705. Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Family (New York, 1944), pp. 36-37. Richard B. Schlatter, The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660-1688 (London, 1940), pp. 23, 26. Oberholzer, p. 117.

[35]Phila. MM min., 29-1-1695, 30-8-1696, 7-9-1696, 29-11-1696, 27-11-1698, 24-12-1698.

[36]Phila. MM min., 31-10-1703.

The husband made no objection, because "a second time also he [the guest] having a like liberty of lodging with them hardened him with expectation that he should suceed with her and inviting her to his house she went alone then he made a second attempt though she refused to fulfill his desire." The husband understood some grievance for he went to the man and the man paid him a sum of money. The husband, apparently thinking the payment eliminated the grievance, showed no understanding of his and his wife's complicity, or of the extent of a grievance in the Society of Friends. He did not see that the third man, a Friend, had offended against the Society and the piety Friends professed, and that a payment of money did not relieve that important grievance.[37]

The Family

One of the criteria used by Friends to discern whether or not a person was a member of the Society was education. Lacking genealogical records and other proofs of membership, a meeting could affirm that a person was a member if he had "had his education amongst Friends."[38]

Education, as Friends used the term, included academic instruction, but was not exclusively or even primarily profane, academic instruction. Friends meant primarily the nurture of children in the principles and discipline of the Society of Friends. Like the congregationalists, the education of Friends had an ulterior religious motive. But because of the religious principles of Friends, they did not clothe the religious purpose of education with academic trappings. The Congregationalist provided his children with the ability to read and understand the Scriptures, the capital laws of Massachusetts, and the sermons of the ministers, to provide "channels through which grace

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[37] Gwynedd MM min., 24-9-1741, ?-12-1741, 3-1-1742. Middletown MM min., 9-4-1690.

[38] Abington MM min., 29-4-1702. Falls MM min., 6-1-1762. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 1-12-1762.

could flow."[39] Since Friends did not believe that grace was confined to channels, they eliminated syllogisms, most theology, and even the necessity of the Scriptures. Gone too were the academic prerequisites, the indirection of "channels," and the catechizing of children. Yet Friends had many peculiar religious practices that identified for them the true church of Christ. There were no articles of theology, but the articles of discipline were numerous and pervasive. Friends did not claim that practicing the discipline and assuming the conduct of a Friend infused one with the "Light," yet they strictly prescribed that conduct for their children and identified the children by their nurture in those ideals.[40]

Friends established grammar schools for the education of their children, but the universal school for the moral training of Quaker children was the family, and the parents or the masters of the households were the teachers. The Society insisted that Quaker children be reared by their parents, or, when necessary, other reputable Friends. Some children had to be "placed out" into other homes, and boys had to be apprenticed to tradesmen to learn vocations. The Society reserved the right to dictate when and where children would be placed if the necessity arose; it uniformly demanded that all young Friends be apprenticed only to Quaker businessmen and artisans. Some Friends objected to the apprenticeship rule and several were disowned for disobeying it. One father was permitted to apprentice his son to a non-Friend. The boy had been apprenticed to a Friend but was discharged because he suffered fits. The father had to apprentice the boy to a tradesman near the father's home, but found no Friend available. When he chose a non-Friend, Falls Monthly Meeting agreed with the choice because of the extraordinary circumstance, but cautioned that this

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[39] Morgan, p. 95.

[40] William C. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism (London, 1921), pp. 535-537.

permission would not set a precedent.[41]

The Society attributed the piety of Friends to their early training by parents. Conversely, a decline in the morals of Friends was attributed to the parents' neglect of their duty. In 1761, when Friends throughout Pennsylvania perceived a decline from the Society's "primative purity," the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting asserted that

> the increase of the breaches of our testimony . . . is for want of due care in parents, and those who the important charge of the education of youths committed to their trust, early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of truth. . . . Wherefore we tenderly advise to an increasing care amongst Friends in all quarters, toward the youth; that the consistency of our principles, in all respects . . . may be enforced upon their tender minds. . . ."[42]

Also in 1761, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting thought that "many of the youth among us, who are apprentices are become very extravagant in their conduct . . . there is much reason to fear that the lenity and indulgence given by some parents and masters, may have contributed to the mischiefs mentioned. . . ." And in 1769, the Meeting recorded that there was "a growing concern in this Meeting to be instrumental to excite the masters of apprentices and heads of families, to enforce by their own circumspection and care, their authority over them. . . ."[43]

The Society gave to parents and masters exclusive authority over children and minors. The Society almost never bypassed parents to reprimand directly a child who had disobeyed his parents or otherwise erred, even though the Society regarded disobedience as a grave error. "Disobedience to parents," state the discipline, "was death by God's law, and must needs bring death now, upon the innocent life in those that are found in such practices."[44] In only one case did Friends directly apprehend a minor. Falls Monthly Meeting found that the boy

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[41] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 23-7-1702. Sadsbury MM min., 17-5-1769, 12-6-1769. Newgarden MM min., 3-3-1770, 2-6-1770. Falls MM min., 5-6-1765, 1-1-1766, 2-6-1766.

[42] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 30-9-1761.

[43] Phila. MM min., 27-11-1761, 24-11-1769.

[44] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, Dept. of Records, p. 26.

had committed fornication, but did not prosecute him while he was a minor. The Meeting waited two years and two months, then disowned him without comment or consultation.[45]

When young men and women attained their majority they became strictly responsible for their conduct toward their parents. J. V. treated his mother with "barberous language" and was drunken. J. H. abused his "ancient" mother. S. T., a young woman, told her father it was "the last day he had to live." J. H. went to sea without his father's permission. G. P. refused to become an apprentice according to the wish that his late father had expressed in his will. All these young people were disowned.[46]

Friends usually expressed their concern for the conduct of youth by advising the parents of delinquent children, as they did in 1761 and 1769. The channels of authority were respected; the parents were always the ultimate administrators of discipline. When morals declined and parents became negligent, the Society did not bypass parental authority, but implored them to use it.

The authority of parents was complemented by a great responsibility. The discipline stated that "it behooves all parents, masters, to be good examples in their families, and to watch over them for good."[47] When the parents proved bad examples to their children or did not nurture or protect the children, the Society did not hesitate to prosecute the parents.

The parents' most basic duty was to provide for the physical needs of the family. Since financial and physical support was the father's responsibility, any dereliction fell to him. Indolence, irresponsible indebtedness, gambling, drunkenness, adultery, and still

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[45] Falls MM min., 6-2-1760.

[46] Concord MM min., 6-12-1756, 2-5-1757. Newgarden MM min., 5-2-1774, 6-8-1774. Goshen MM min., 11-5-1770, 6-7-1770. Phila. MM min., 30-10-1767, 29-1-1768, 30-6-1769, 4-8-1769. Middletown MM min., 3-7-1760, 2-4-1761. Concord MM min., 6-2-1765, 3-4-1765. Phila. MM min., 30-3-1770, 27-4-1770, 29-1-1773, 26-3-1773.

[47] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, pp. 26, 27.

other delinquencies caused fathers to neglect the welfare of their families. When Friends suspected some neglect they would caution parents or demand an account of their affairs. When Richland Monthly Meeting found that T. C.'s gambling and debts endangered his family, it moved to inspect his accounts and affairs. T. C. told Friends that his affairs were none of their business and cursed them. They disowned him. Goshen Monthly Meeting objected to S. T.'s use of his land, for they perceived that such use might prejudice the welfare of his family. Because of unusual circumstances, one mother was found derelict in her duty. She, a widow about to remarry, was prevented from doing so by Friends because she refused to settle her late husband's will and give her children their "portions." She utterly refused to arrange the business so that Friends could oversee the settlement. When threatened with disownment, she settled.[48]

The most common violation of parental duty was desertion of family. Monthly Meeting minutes reveal that dozens of Pennsylvania Friends in the colonial period abandoned their families and usually their creditors, too. Since two of them left for reasons of adultery and almost all the rest were in debt, one might tentatively conclude that they fled to escape their creditors rather than their families.[49] Their indebtedness was frequently linked with gambling, drunkenness, and other behavior which Friends thought disqualified them as responsible heads of households.

No examples of cruelty toward children by their own parents were recorded. Bradford Monthly Meeting disciplined another man for severely correcting a child who had been placed in his home, and for putting her "in a nauseous hole in the ground."[50]

For the welfare of children and in the interest of justice, the fabric of the family might be unwoven. When a family was severely

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[48]Richland MM min., 20-3-1747, 2-1-1756. Goshen MM min., 3-7-1725. Wrightstown MM min., 1-4-1736, 3-6-1736, 7-7-1736, 5-8-1736.

[49]Phila. MM min., 24-4-1720. Goshen MM min., 15-4-1730.

[50]Bradford MM min., 18-9-1767. Goshen MM min., 7-3-1760.

in debt, the grievance to the creditor was compounded by the possible privation of the debtor's children. To redress the grievance to the creditor, Friends demanded that the debtor surrender his property and, in some cases, his person.[51] To protect the children from harm, provide them with a superior moral training, and further unencumber the father of expenses, the Society requested that the parents place their children in the homes of stable Quakers. If the couple refused, the Society could proceed against them as delinquent persons.

These circumstances describe S. S. and his family. Falls Monthly Meeting warned S. S. that unless he placed out his children, he and his wife would be regarded as delinquent. In December, 1771 the parents procrastinated by informing Friends that they planned to move away in the spring. The Meeting was then providing clothes for their children. By May the family had neither moved away not placed out the children. In June the father explained that it was his wife who refused to part with the children. The Meeting prepared to disown them. In August the disownment was ready for publication, but was delayed because S. S. was reported ill. Additional aid was offered to the family. In October S. S. died. The Monthly Meeting paid the funeral expenses.[52]

The above delinquents had abdicated their proper role as parents. Other parents perverted the role by encouraging their children to breach the discipline. They abused their authority within the home by assisting or defending their children's errors, just as some parents had assisted their children to marry irregularly. Rather than suffer the error of the children and the misguidance of the parents, Friends would first withdraw the authority of the parent and then dissolve the obligation to obey them. When Friends insisted that "parents ought to be obeyed next to God," they never intended to make

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[51] See Chapter VIII.

[52] Phila. MM min., 30-2-1731. Exeter MM min., 28-12-1758, 22-2-1759, 29-3-1759. Gwynedd MM min., 17-9-1765, 3-12-1765, 25-3-1766. Sadsbury MM min., 21-2-1770, 21-3-1770. Falls MM min., 2-10-1771, 6-11-1771, 4-12-1771, 6-5-1772.

the will of the parents absolute and the family an autonomous unit within the Society. The discipline of the Society and the consensus of the Meeting was the intermediary between God and parents, for through them God had expressed his will. Parents received their authority, retained it, and exercised it only in accordance with the discipline of the Society. When parents perverted the authority, the Society would even dissolve the family itself in order to treat the evil.[53]

The discipline of the Society and the ties of family tragically collided in the situation of one father who was confronted with a dispute between his two sons. One son complained to Newgarden Monthly Meeting that his brother, J. S., owed him a debt. The Meeting took up the claim and prosecuted J. S. J. S. delayed twenty months without repaying the debt; then the Meeting disowned him. Faced with this fraternal quarrel, I. S., the father, became angry with the Meeting for driving a righteous wedge into his family.

> The friends appointed to see the testimony against [J. S.] . . . read gives an account that they shewed it to said [J. S.] . . . and that he and his father joyned in running out against friends and said the testimony was a parsil of lies that they had made up amongst themselves and when a friend stood up and began to read it at the breaking up of a first day meeting . . . [I. S.] stood up and bid him leave of reading it for is a parsil of lies steped to the friend and catched the paper and tore it to peices. . . .

The debtor son was ultimately disowned; the father later condemned his passionate behavior.[54]

In a much simpler case, Falls Monthly Meeting learned that another J. S. had boasted that his daughter was familiar with a married man. J. S. "seems to countinance and too much indulge, excuse, and justify such conduct; and to paliate, evade and deny some things that manifestly appear to be true. . . ." Falls Friends disowned him, his wife, and his daughter.[55]

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[53] Middletown MM min., 6-11-1755, 4-12-1755.

[54] Newgarden MM min., 28-3-1736, 27-6-1737 through 27-3-1738.

[55] Falls MM min., 3-6-1767, 7-10-1767.

When members of the family other than parents assisted delinquents, loyalty likewise suffered for justice's sake. A young man helped his sister abscond to Maryland where she bore a bastard child. J. C. tried to prevent his father's creditors from seizing his father's property. S. E. did likewise for her husband. A. L. assisted her husband in the operation of his gambling house. The two women were disowned.[56]

Because the Society of Friends in the seventeenth century was a voluntary union of adults, hardly a generation old, the family did not have the importance in the Society that it later attained. It is ironic that in the eighteenth century the family became an office in the Society and was charged with the education of Quaker children, for neither was part of the earlier generation of Quakerism.

The founders of Quakerism, like the anabaptists, believed that they had voluntarily gathered into a community because each Friend had been impelled by the power of God working within him to unite with men conscious of the same fundamental spiritual change, regeneration, or rebirth. Conversely, no one belonged to their community who had not been led there by God's Spirit and had not experienced regeneration; the people outside their community were the unregenerate.[57]

Although the early Friends were profoundly convinced that those infused with the "Light" shared a spiritual condition superior to that of the rest of mankind, they did not believe that the distinction or their superiority was permanent. Friends insisted upon the distinction in order to witness to other men the power of the Spirit and wound other men's consciences in the hope that the Spirit might enter them also. Hugh Barbour calls their attitude "positive apocalypticism": they were certain their faith would sweep the world and that the event would occur within their lifetime. They avoided giving themselves a

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[56] Newgarden MM min., 29-6-1730. Phila. MM min., 9-4-1761. Goshen MM min., 6-7-1770, 8-2-1771. Phila. MM min., 30-4-1756, 27-8-1756, 29-10-1756.

[57] Rufus M. Jones, The Later Periods of Quakerism (London, 1921), I, 109.

name which might distinguish them from all mankind.[58]

The beliefs of early Friends caused them to neglect the organization of their Society. In their generation "personalities counted for more than systems," wrote Rufus Jones.[59] As part of that neglect, Friends lacked a definition or criterion of membership, a means of identifying a Friend. Identification of the "saints" was really no problem in the seventeenth century when the English government pursued them, persecuted them and supplied opportunities to witness to one's conversion to the "Light." But also, when the victory of the "Light" in the souls of all men was imminent, there was no need to identify the community, define its boundaries, or withdraw behind them. In a minute of 1676, London Yearly Meeting still defined the Society as "All the faithful men and women in every country and city and nation, whose faith stands in the power of God, the Gospel of Christ, and have received the Gospel and are in possession of the Gospel. . . ."[60]

By 1700 time had changed the membership so that the definition of 1676 was probably an inaccurate description of the membership. In 1737 London Yearly Meeting, answering a bureaucratic question about "Removals and Settlements," ammended the existing definition of membership. The amendment did not change Friends' practices, but belatedly acknowledged that Friends' practices had changed. The amendment stated that children born of Quaker parents were Quakers, that the children had a "birthright" among Friends. The Yearly Meeting had acknowledged that the Society was not composed of converts or "convinced" Friends, but of birthright Friends; not of individuals, but of families. When birthright admission was only an informal practice, it disturbed the integrity of some Friends. It did not escape the acute perception of the schismatic George Keith, who required that his own "Christian Quakers" restrict membership to believers--persons who confessed their

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[58]Hugh Barbour, The Quakers in Puritan England (New Haven, 1964), pp. 127-159, 185.

[59]Jones, I, 106.

[60]Jones, I, 109, 110.

belief when they attained intellectual maturity.[61]

The change from membership characterized by belief to membership characterized by parentage suggests a more intrinsic alteration in the nature of the Society of Friends. In describing two archetypes of religious organization, the church and the sect, Ernst Troeltsch writes, "The essence of the Church is its objective character. The individual is born into it. . . ." "Compared with this institutional principle . . . the sect is a voluntary community. . . . An individual is not born into a sect; he enters it on the basis of conscious conversion. . . ."[62] From Troeltsch's formulation it would appear that the Society of Friends shifted from one end of the typological scale to the opposite but the change was not quite so absolute.

In the institutional Church, epitomized by medieval Roman Catholicism, admission of a child required only that the child have parents who were Church members.[63] The admission really described the parents, the Church, and the Church's power rather than the child. The child was not accepted because he had been independently converted, but because the Church was the instituted, exclusive means of grace that could and possibly would convert him.

Friends rejected the distinction between those who were converted and those who were accepted in order for conversion: the former were the true church of Christ and all Friends were the former. The 1737 admission policy changed that conception of church membership only in part, for admission never became pro forma. According to Quaker doctrine, when the indwelling of the Spirit produced a new spiritual being, the recipient embraced a new mode of life. Rigid personal ethics, a new spirit of community and harmony, and a distinctive Quaker witness characterized the new-born Friend. Hugh Barbour writes that "The change in daily life required by those who became Quakers . . . was probably as drastic as that in any religious move-

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[61] Jones, I., 108. Braithwaite, pp. 482, 483.

[62] Troeltsch, pp. 338, 339.

[63] Troeltsch, p. 338.

ment in Protestant history."[64] This change was the outward sign of the indwelling Spirit. Membership in the Society presupposed both the inward and outward change. Because the adult Friends of the eighteenth century had to practice the same ethics and peculiar testimonies as those of seventeenth-century Friends, admission was pro forma neither in the seventeenth nor in the eighteenth century.

However, eighteenth-century Friends admitted infants who obviously could not practice the ethics of the Society. This deficiency of the infant was remedied by the parents, because the admission of the child acknowledged that he was born of Quaker parents in a household ringed with institutional assurances for the nurture and religious education of the child. Given the Society's concern for the family expressed through the discipline, a birth in a Quaker household reasonably assured the Society that an adult, professing Quaker would be added to their number. When a Monthly Meeting recognized an adult as a member because he "has had his education amongst Friends," it acknowledged that the member's family had fulfilled its obligations and promises.[65]

Friends never declared that the guardianship of the children affected their spiritual natures, yet they assumed that tutored piety in the children was the equivalent of faith. First, the simple membership of the parents certified that they shared the "Light"; these parents promised a moral education of their children in a household that the Society knew was pious; finally, the Society accepted the person reared in a Quaker household as a member. All members shared the "Light." In sum: faith begot faith.

Friends had confused appearance with reality--a greater danger for the Society than for the more conservative Protestant churches, for unlike Lutherans and Calvinists, Friends maintained that all Friends were regenerate. When they admitted the children of Friends and effectively eliminated the confessional test for regeneration, they continued to suppose they were the same exclusive, regnerate com-

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[64] Barbour, p. 160.

[65] Abington MM min., 29-4-1702.

munity. The Lutheran and Calvinist denominations (Presbyterian, Reformed, and congregational) admitted the children of members through baptism and, the Calvinists, by reasoning that as God's covenant with Abraham had included his posterity, the new covenant extended to the children of the church. However, in these conservative denominations admission of children did not mean that the children were regenerate; whereas, Friends, when they admitted children, assumed that parental faith fostered filial faith. Calvin wrote, "I grant, indeed, that many which are the children of the faithful, according to the flesh, are counted bastards, and not legitimate, because they thrust themselves out of the holy progeny through their unbelief."[66]

The practice of New England congregationalists, because they attempted to identify the regenerate, resembled the practices of Friends more closely than those of the continental Calvinists. Continental Calvinists did not claim the ability to recognize the regenerate, and, consequently, did not claim they were exclusively the regenerate; the New Englanders claimed both. "Regenerate men," wrote Perry Miller of New England congregational theory, "when a company of them are met together and can satisfy each other that they are men of faith, they covenant together, and out of their compact create a church." "Therefore in their church polity they [New Englanders] identified the Covenant of Grace, which was of the soul, with the covenant of the church, which was of the community."[67] By their own standards of regeneration and conceptions of church polity, the congregationalists until 1662, and Friends until 1737, were select religious communities.

The analogy between congregationalists and Friends alledgedly extends beyond 1662 and 1737 respectively, because the alteration that congregationalists made in their admissions practice in 1662 by the "half-way covenant," and the Quaker alteration in 1737 by "birthright"

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[66] Troeltsch, p. 478. Ronald S. Wallace, Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament (London, 1953), pp. 192-194.

[67] Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (New York, 1939), pp. 435, 461.

admission have been equated. There is some similarity in the two practices, but also a significant difference which is suggested in the epithet "half-way." Congregationalists and Friends similarly provided membership for children who by comparison with their elders were spiritually deficient, but whereas the congregationalists provided half-way membership for the children, Friends completely assimilated theirs. The apologists for the "half-way covenant," to defend it from conservatives who feared this innovation would destroy the quality and identity of the church, insisted that full membership would remain only for those who satisfied the historic test for regeneration.[68]

Friends, true to their customary neglect of doctrine, never had institutionalized the test for regeneration, and in 1737 did not ponder the significance of the birthright alteration. For years before 1737 Friends had been admitting the children of members; in 1737 they simply recorded that such was the practice of Friends. There was no qualitative distinction between "birthright" and "convinced" membership.

The spiritual quality of the Society of Friends, before and after 1737, is difficult to determine; however, the admissions practice after 1737 was less apt to preserve the "primative purity" of the Society: the New Testament ethics, the spirit of harmony and community, and, especially, the religious enthusiasm. By seventeenth-century practice, the candidate for membership had to prove his conviction; in the eighteenth century, Friends had to prove lack of conviction to exclude Quaker children whom they must otherwise admit. The difference in standards was the difference between the enthusiastic, zealous Friends of the seventeenth century and the reticent, obedient Friends of the eighteenth. But by the middle of the eighteenth century, even the nominal obedience of Friends to the discipline was declining. Whether the policy of 1737 changed the spiritual composition of the Society cannot be discerned, but the policy certainly helped to change the appear-

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[68] Miller, The New England Mind: From Colony to Province (New York, 1953), pp. 97-98.

ance of the Society and the conduct of its members.[69]

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[69] See Chapter X.

CHAPTER III

PERSONAL CONDUCT

Fornication

Although fornication is difficult to detect, it was, second to prohibited marriages, the offense most frequently prosecuted by Friends. The frequent convictions for fornication best display the standards of evidence and justice in the discipline of the Society, for the most reliable standards of proof, that is, witnesses and victims, are missing in this offense. The man involved never reported fornication to any official Friend and the woman rarely did so. Unless she were the victim of an assault or rape, she, like the man, could not report fornication without exposing herself to the disciplinary action of her Monthly Meeting.

The Monthly Meetings had no systematic means of detecting fornication. They observed acquaintanceships and courtships, listened to rumor, requested explanations of suspicious conduct, and admonished suspects. The Meeting might even reprimand a Quakeress for being with a man in a situation of privacy which might lead to fornication. Many of these practices are illustrated in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting's dealings with W. F.:

> . . . [he] for a long series of years occasioned much grief and trouble to our religious society arising from the various reports of his vicious and scandalous behaviour towards women, but as such secret works are often difficult to prove, nothing more could be done for a long time, but frequent admonition that he would prevent such reports by a more cautious and watchfull life, and that he would make sincere application to God for power over temptation.[1]

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[1] Phila. MM min., 30-5-1731.

Some offenders provoked their own disclosure. Two young Friends were going about boasting of frequent fornication with a young woman. She utterly denied the fact. Richland Monthly Meeting never questioned the honesty of the young men and disowned them. The curiosity of Friends was aroused by some men and women who were found living together. Several of these women even bore children. When their respective Monthly Meetings asked to see evidence of their marriage they all refused to produce the marriage certificates. Friends concluded that the suspects were not married and disowned them all. When Chester Monthly Meeting investigated a man who was feigning marriage, it was surprised to learn that he was doing so to avoid paying a tax on single men. His plea was not accepted because defrauding the government of taxes was also offensive to Friends, and, for both offenses, tax evasion and cohabiting with a woman, Friends disowned the crafty fellow.[2]

Friends reprimanded several men for "essays toward unchaste practices" or attempting to commit fornication. In almost all cases, the men were flirting with women; yet their respective Meetings inferred that their motives were fornication. The motives of only four men were obvious. One, in order to seduce his neighbor's wife, promised to pay her. Another broke into a woman's bedroom and caused quite a stir. There was no doubt about the other two men, who were very much embarrassed: one was found in bed with a woman of "debauched" character; the other was caught with "a woman of ill fame in the woods."[3]

In the great majority of fornication cases, paternity was the evidence. For the single or widowed woman who bore the child, there was no evasion once her pregnant condition had been perceived by other

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[2]Richland MM min., 19-9-1765, 17-10-1765. Chester MM min., 30-5-1763, 27-6-1763. Radnor MM min., 14-12-1769. Chester MM min., 28-10-1776, 30-12-1776.

[3]Falls MM min., 2-7-1702. Abington MM min., 27-9-1738, 28-3-1739, 28-3-1744, 25-4-1744. Gwynedd MM min., 29-10-1771, 31-12-1771. Darby MM min., 2-3-1769, 29-6-1769. Goshen MM min., 16-6-1742. Falls MM min., 1-9-1732, 6-10-1732.

Friends. With very few procedural complications, she was charged and usually disowned. Occasionally, she was pardoned.[4]

More than simple pregnancy was necessary to prove newlywed Friends guilty of fornication. The meetings had to ascertain that the child was born significantly less than nine months after marriage, and, therefore, had to know the time elapsed between marriage and birth. Since the couples were married by Friends, the Monthly Meetings had little trouble determining the question of dates and time. If Friends did not have the necessary dates, the Monthly Meetings requested the information of that couple they suspected. The couple could make no "Fifth Amendment" plea, but had to divulge the dates. W. B. was prosecuted by Middletown Monthly Meeting not for fornication but for refusal to "give them any satisfactory account of the time of his marriage, or the space of time between that and the birth of the child." Friends regarded his refusal to cooperate as a show of contempt for the discipline of the Society and prosecuted him for this additional offense. In a slightly different manner, C. B. displayed contempt when his meeting suspected him of fornication and he ignored their concern. The meeting decided to wait and watch. Six months later the evidence appeared and he was straightaway disowned. B. S. and his wife were questioned about fornication:

> . . . it beihg perceived by her appearing pregnant, they were repeatedly spoke to on the account, but always denied their indecency with an uncommon . . . assurance she alledging indisposition of another kind for her appearances as aforementioned of her being pregnant and the entreaties of their Friends to acknowledge to the truth, they continued inflexibly obstinate in denying until she was delivered of a child wherefore as such an obstinate, evasive and deceitful deportment must be attended with pernicious consequences, as well as adding sin to sin and that repeatedly, and that whilst they knew themselves guilty of such heneousness . . . it is therefore the sense of this Meeting that they be forthwith disowned. . . .[5]

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[4]Chester MM min., 30-2-1750. Goshen MM min., 16-6-1755, 15-12-1755.

[5]Concord MM min., 4-7-1721, 18-9-1752. Middletown MM min., 1-11-1759, 7-2-1760. Newgarden MM min., 5-6-1762, 1-1-1763. Abington MM min., 25-3-1754.

Because some babies were delivered prematurely, fornication could not explain every untimely birth. To determine the circumstances of a birth, the meeting might question the midwife or other witnesses. The suspected couple, protesting their innocence, might bring such witnesses in their defense. J. R. did so when he and others witnessed an accident to his wife that provoked a miscarriage.[6]

These couples were guilty of compounding their fornication with the additional error of marrying within the Society of Friends while aware that they were guilty of fornication. Obedient couples would have confessed fornication when they petitioned for marriage, whether or not the fiancées knew themselves pregnant and foresaw their embarrassment and exposure. Very few volunteered such information. If fornication did not produce pregnancy, we can suspect that Friends rarely learned of the sinful condition of the betrothed. If it did produce pregnancy, the couple often proceeded to marry anyway, rather than reveal the condition that only they detected. Months later their sin was exposed and they were charged with "imposing their marriage upon Friends." This show of moral obtuseness added to the burden of their guilt. Of a woman in these circumstances, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting said "that after so much hypocrisy and falsehood for which there does not at present appear any reason to believe she is truly penitent, the usual course of dealing is neither necessary nor expedient." She was immediately disowned.[7]

The near certainty of being disowned for this double delinquency should have prevented any thoughtful couple from having the Society solemnize their marriage. To explain the fact that many couples nevertheless did impose upon the Society, one may surmise that at the time of their Quaker marriage neither partner knew that the fiancée was pregnant. Many births occurred seven months after marriage. In the two months before the marriages, the fiancées might not have detected

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[6]Gwynedd MM min., 31-5-1768. Middletown MM min., 5-7-1700.

[7]Abington MM min., 27-7-1772, 21-9-1772, 25-4-1774. Phila. MM min., 29-3-1747.

the pregnancy, or might not have been sure, and dared to marry anyway.

Most such couples did not marry under the care of Friends. The dilemma of one of these couples illustrates the situation of most of them. The young man was not a Friend but was petitioning Abington Monthly Meeting for admission. He intended to become a member, then to become engaged and married to a young woman of that Meeting. While Abington Friends were spending many months observing his conduct and examining his qualifications for membership, they learned that he had irregularly married the young Friend. Several months later she bore a child. The couple had changed their plans for an orderly marriage upon learning of her pregnancy. At least seventy per cent of the Friends found guilty of fornication also were discovered when they married outside the Society and too soon became parents. It was not unusual for these couples to be pardoned.[8]

A few Friends tried to conceal their fornication and paternity. S. D. did so by hiding her child. T. P. was immediately disowned for "applying to physicians to prevent if possible his wicked actions to come to light," conduct which the Meeting termed an "abomination," and "henious." Four persons forged or altered the dates of their marriage certificates so that nine or more months appeared to have elapsed since their marriages. The most ingenious person af all tried to get the woman with whom he committed fornication to marry another man, secretly and quickly, but he was caught. Several men fled when their accomplices became pregnant. Unlike the other evasive Friends, these men could not hope to conceal their sins from their meetings or escape punishment. First, their hasty departure from a Monthly Meeting exposed them to disownment; secondly, the accusation of paternity assured their already probable disownment. They might have fled to

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[8] Abington MM min., 28-11-1774. Darby MM min., 6-4-1744.

escape civil prosecution for paternity or to escape marriage to the mother[9]

When the Society apprehended a guilty bachelor, it demanded that he fulfill the just demands of the mother, who often demanded that he marry her. If the mother made no demands of the father, the Society still required that she reveal his identity, for it had its own demands to make. If she did not name him, she was sure to be disowned.[10]

After satisfying any demands for redress, the delinquent male or female had to condemn the act of fornication. If the Monthly Meeting accepted the written condemnation, it published the paper, possibly severely embarrassing a timid Friend. The Monthly Meeting had placed such a Friend in a dilemma. If he earnestly desired to be pardoned he could decry his sin. He would have impressed the Meeting, embarrassed himself, and been pardoned. If he chose to retain his composure, he could equivocate and avoid all pejoratives in describing his sin. He would appear composed, insincere, and unworthy of pardon. H. H. condemned her "carnal knowledge of him that is now my husband before marriage a crime very odious and henious in the sight of God and scandalous to his Church and people." She convinced the meeting: other women could not muster the equanimity to do so. Many disowned Friends who ignored the Society when they were accused, probably feared making the public confession more than they feared disownment.[11]

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[9]Phila. MM min., 29-6-1759, 29-2-1760. Abington MM min., 25-8-1760, 22-9-1760. Gwynedd MM min., 26-6-1770. Darby MM min., 24-6-1769. Abington MM min., 31-12-1770. Middletown MM min., 4-4-1702. Goshen MM min., 17-12-1734, 16-4-1735. Darby MM min., 30-8-1770, 27-9-1770. Abington MM min., 26-5-1766.

[10]Concord MM min., 7-8-1760. Middletown MM min., 7-3-1771, 4-4-1771, 5-8-1773, 3-2-1774, 3-3-1774, 7-7-1774, 4-8-1774. Phila. MM min., 2-4-1772, 28-8-1772. Chester MM min., 25-3-1724. Gwynedd MM min., 27-9-1739, 29-11-1739. Darby MM min., 2-4-1755, 7-5-1755. Concord MM min., 7-12-1731, 6-1-1732, 8-9-1773, 6-10-1773. Abington MM min., 27-7-1772, 31-8-1772.

[11]See Chap. I, p. 6, the case of S. P. After writing dozens of these condemnations one suspects that Friends might have become callous to sharp adjectives. Could the clerk of meeting who wrote this denunciation have been appalled at the sin? " . . . the enemy of his soul found him off his watch and in the slippery paths of youth and caught him in the sinful snare of fornication." Gwynedd MM min., 27-2-1770.

The cases of single male Friends accused of paternity deserve additional attention because these cases disclose the Society's attitude toward fornication as well as the nature of the justice administered by Friends.

By the usual standards of proof and criminal procedure, paternity is difficult to prove; witnesses and circumstantial evidence usually do not exist. The Society of Friends thought it had evidence against the accused when it learned that the accused had compensated the mother in any way. Some men had paid sums of money from £5 to £60 for support of a child, for the woman's "lying inn," or for release from responsibility and further presecution. Most of the men denied they had made such payments. One denied that he was guilty of paternity, but admitted that he had paid the girl £5 which act he gladly offered to condemn. The Society made reply to all these men: as Chester Monthly Meeting explained, "this meeting looks upon his giving her money or anything else to stop a prosecution against him as a demonstration of guilt."[12]

In the great majority of cases there was no circumstantial evidence. In some cases the Monthly Meetings reported that no evidence could be produced by either accuser or accused to prove or disprove the charge. Nevertheless, the Meetings found the accused guilty.[13] For the Meetings, the accusation was itself sufficient cause for prosecution and, if the defendant did not disprove the accusation to the satisfaction of Friends, for disownment. The burden of the proof was clearly upon the defendant. When accused, W. B. demanded "Friends to make proof: wherefore . . .[two Friends] are appointed to acquaint him that the Meeting looks upon it his business to clear himself. . . ." If the accused could not disprove the charge or refused to do so, he would probably be disowned.[14]

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[12]Radnor MM min., 14-8-1752. Abington MM min., 28-10-1754, 30-1-1764, 26-11-1770. Darby MM min., 1-3-1770. Goshen MM min., 18-3-1747, 7-4-1747, 10-9-1753. Chester MM min., 30-4-1746.

[13]Bradford MM min., 18-10-1759, 15-11-1759, 14-3-1760, 13-6-1760.

[14]Middletown MM min., 1-11-1759, 7-2-1760.

The statements disowning these accused Friends have an aura of equivocation that reflects uncertainty as to guilt. One Friend was "somewhat guilty of the matter he is charged with or otherwise hath acted indescreat." Another "has not cleared up the matter in his own favor . . . [and] by several circumstances which appears in his conduct and management of the said affair, there is great room to suspect his being too far concerned in the said charge, and that he is not so clear thereof as he alleges, and would have the world to think he is. . . ." Abington Monthly Meeting announced:

> . . . we are of the mind that the said [J. P.] . . . hath not at all times so prudently avoided the said [M.'s] . . . company as he ought to have done, considering the divers temptations respecting her, which he himself acknowledges he hath at times met with and on the whole, it doth not appear to us, that anything the said [J.] hath urged in favor of his case, is sufficient to clear him from remaining under the imputation of being guilty of unchaste familiarity with her. . . .[15]

To bolster the indictment against the accused or to quiet their own uncertainty, the Monthly Meetings reported accessory facts about the accused that belittled his character and might be separate and sufficient reasons for disownment. Of T. J. "several substantial persons in the neighborhood report . . . that he is of a loose dissolute life and conversation, such as swearing and drinking, and keeping vain loose and idle company." Such reflections upon the life and character of persons could endanger the accuser as well as the accused. In two of the four cases in which women failed in their accusations, one failed by "being very trifling" in character; the other because she was "of doubtful credit."[16] Only twice did the defendants disprove the accusations. One defendant brought evidence that exposed several contradictions in the testimony of his accuser. The allegations of a second woman were found insupportable (and she was disowned for slan-

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[15]Abington MM min., 29-5-1758, 28-2-1746, 30-4-1746, 25-2-1760, 28-4-1760, 26-5-1760.

[16]Abington MM min., 29-6-1748, 31-8-1752. Middletown MM min., 7-6-1729, 6-9-1729.

der).[17]

The presumption of guilt that operated against the accused Friend in paternity cases is reflected in the statistics on fornication: there is a balance between men and women convicted of fornication. If Friends had employed circumstantial evidence to prove paternity, the number of women convicted would have exceeded the number of men. Only by presuming the guilt of the father could the number of men convicted equal the number of women convicted.

In the disciplinary records of the congregational churches of Massachusetts, the number of women convicted of fornication significantly exceeded the number of men. The imbalance occurred because the churches did not presume that the men accused of paternity were guilty. However, one cannot conclude that the residents of Massachusetts never made that presumption. Unlike the Quakers of Pennsylvania, the congregational churches shared with the state the prosecution of fornication. The Quakers never shared their jurisdiction with the state. When the province of Massachusetts prosecuted a man for paternity, it presumed that "the man charged by the woman to be the father . . . shall be the reputed father." The presumption caused more men that women to be convicted of fornication. In Massachusetts, " . . . the large proportion of men sentenced by the courts contrasts with the comparatively small proportion of men censured by the churches."[18] The presumption was not a uniquely Quaker practice; Friends may have employed it within their church because it was a familiar part of their English heritage and common to both Puritan and Quaker.

Friends added new motives to the anxious search for guilty fathers. In modern courts of law, as in provincial Massachusetts, paternity is a civil action, not a criminal one. The aggrieved woman

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[17] Concord MM min., 7-8-1752, 6-1-1752. Chester MM min., 25-6-1753, 30-7-1753. Newgarden MM min., 25-11-1758, 7-6-1766, 5-7-1766.

[18] The Charter and General Laws of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay (Boston, 1814), p. 116. Emil Oberholzer, Jr., Delinquent Saints, p. 129.

initiated an action at law against the accused man. If the accused was proven guilty, he had to make satisfaction to the mother of his illegitimate child. The Society of Friends likewise required that the guilty man satisfy the mother, but also prosecuted the father when the mother made no demands of him, when there was neither grievance, nor accusation, nor plaintiff. The Society required that the mother who made no complaint identify the father. It disowned the mother who refused.

The Society had an interest in the offender that was distinct from the grievance to the mother. In one such case, Abington Monthly Meeting accused B. G. of paternity without any complaint from the pregnant young woman. He remained silent. The young woman still refused to accuse B. G. The Meeting said "she would rather take the shame to herself, than say who the father was." This case had no plaintiff, no grievance, and no proof. Yet B. G. and the young woman were disowned. In another case, a woman accused J. E. of paternity. J. E.'s father came to the Meeting on the day J. E. was to be publicly disowned and said, "They need not do it: for I am the wretched man that have done the thing and I believe my son to be clear." Exeter Monthly Meeting disowned the father for "the heavy reproach which he . . . hath brought upon the Truth and Friends." Yet the investigation continued. Four months later the Meeting disowned the son for the same crime:

> . . . as there is a probability that he is not clear of unchaste familiarity with the said woman and as a heavy reproach hath brought upon our holy profession by the said charge, we think it most for the honour of Truth to testify against him . . . until his innocence (if innocent) appears to the satisfaction of Friends; or until he (if guilty) manifests that Godly sorrow for his transgression.[19]

A different case, illustrating the same procedure, was that of a Quakeress who accused a Quaker of paternity. The man died while she was prosecuting him for redress. After his death, Abington Monthly Meeting asked her "to take the shame and blame on herself" and to "leave

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[19]Abington MM min., 28-4-1760, 26-5-1760. Exeter MM min., 30-12-1756, 25-8-1757, 29-9-1757, 27-10-1757, 29-12-1757, 26-1-1758.

his name out of her condemnation." She refused and was disowned.[20] Abington Meeting appeared more anxious to find a living person to acknowledge the guilt and shame than to redress a grievance. The additional reasons that Friends had for disclosing and disowning delinquents may have been the most important ones, for in the absence of grievances, the Society still prosecuted and disowned. The additional reasons seem to have been that the incriminated Friends were publicly in disrepute and could cause the Society also to be held in disrepute. These infamous Friends had to be publicly distinguished from the Society, despite the uncertainty of their guilt and despite the guilt of another, unavailable Friend.

The statements disowning men guilty of paternity support the assignment of such motives to the Society. J. B. was disowned as "the reputed father of a bastard child."[21] Darby Monthly Meeting disowned J. K. "in order to clear truth and the society from such scandal (which otherwise it might in some measure be charged with). . . ." Middletown "Friends seeing no probability of W. B.'s . . . clearing himself of the scandalous fact laid to his charge; it is the sense of this Meeting, that for the reputation of our profession, he ought to be excluded the Society, until he make his innocence appear, or condemn his fault to Friends' satisfaction. . . ."[22]

It is not possible to discern whether or not Friends intended to deter future offenders by presuming the guilt of accused men. It is obvious that their vigorous prosecutions did not have that effect. Only irregular marriage exceeded fornication in frequency of occurrence. During the colonial period fornication and illegitimate births increased while membership remained stable. By the disownments it produced, prosecution of fornication decimated the membership of Friends. Had deterrence been the motive of Friends, the decimation would have been

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[20] Abington MM min., 22-12-1730.

[21] Emphasis added.

[22] Darby MM min., 1-4-1773, 1-8-1765, 28-11-1765. Middletown MM min., 1-5-1760, 5-6-1760, 7-8-1760.

a costly method. But judging from Friends' commentary on the disowned, we might conclude that they did not regret the loss and may have desired that men and women in disrepute be severed from their Society.

Drunkenness

"All excess is ill," wrote William Penn, "But Drunkenness is of the worst Sort." Like most Friends, Penn deplored drunkenness; he called it "dangerous," "mad," and bestial. Despite his disgust, he neither ceased to use alcoholic beverages nor urged others to cease. Like the Puritans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Penn preached and practiced temperance, not abstinence. Whereas he never prevented the manufacture or distribution of alcoholic beverages in Pennsylvania, he did not hesitate to employ the power of the state to prevent excesses and to insure temperance. The inns and taverns of colonial Pennsylvania were strictly licensed and regulated: the owners must close their taverns at eight o'clock; they must prohibit drinkers from staying longer than one hour; they must report by name every stranger who arrived after daylight. Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Lloyd occasionally visited the taverns late in the evenings and ordered the people he found at them to return to their homes.[23]

The Society of Friends shared Penn's attitude: temperance but not abstinence. Drunkenness was an error that all Monthly Meetings frequently confronted. Yet the difficulties that drunkenness continually created in the colonial period never provoked the Society to ban the use of alcoholic beverages in order to simplify their problem. Friends attempted to moderate the consumption and eliminate the abuses rather than prohibit the agent.

Some colonists sold rum to Indians either for the customary profit or to intoxicate and then defraud them. The Indians, it seems,

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[23] William Penn, Some Fruits of Solitude (New York, 1903), p. 60. Jones, Quakers in American Colonies, pp. 531, 269. E. C. O. Beatty, William Penn as Social Philosopher (New York, 1939), pp. 296, 298, 299. Oberholzer, pp. 152, 153.

drank "not to Moderation, but to Excess & Drunkenness." In dealing with this problem, Penn and his fellow Quakers did not prohibit the Indians from drinking, but prohibited the sale of rum to the Indians. None "may sell sum to the Indians, directly or indirectly, by any pretence whatsoever," stated Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting. The prohibition also forbade the subtle evasion of selling rum to those who sold it to the Indians.[24]

After 1700 the conditions changed so that Quakers were less concerned with Indians and rum. The influx of German immigrants into the lands between Chester County and the Susquehanna River buffered the Quakers from the Indians on the Pennsylvania frontier. Two Friends were caught selling rum to Indians in 1703; the next and last offense occurred in 1735. The rum trade had become the concession of fur traders and adventurers.[25]

In pursuit of profit, Pennsylvanians also gave rum away. To induce dull-wittedness in whites, the managers of "vendues" gave liquor to their patrons. The principal difference between whites and Indians seems to have been that whites were too "sharp" to pay for being defrauded. Friends would not tolerate such practices within their community and as early as 1724 they began prohibiting the providing of rum at vendues "which by frequent experience, hath proved very hurtful and dishonorable." They reiterated the prohibition throughout the colonial period.[26]

During the eighteenth century, Friends' policy shifted from temperance toward abstinence, a shift that was not complete until the nineteenth century. By 1776 Friends, while still permitting the consumption of liquor, had altered their policy to restrict the sale of

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[24] Sydney V. James, A People Among Peoples, p. 88. Phila. Quarterly Meeting min., 7-1-1687. Falls MM min., 6-2-1687, 4-3-1687.

[25] Chester MM min., 28-12-1703, 29-3-1704. Newgarden MM min., 30-6-1735.

[26] Falls MM min., 1-2-1724. Middletown MM min., 6-12-1717, 7-3-1724. Goshen MM min., 17-10-1750. Phila. MM min., 25-5-1759. Gwynedd MM min., 25-8-1752, 27-1-1767.

liquor by Friends.

Friends owned and operated taverns, inns, and public houses during the colonial period. The Society observed these members to ensure that they led sober lives and kept orderly houses. Order was required by the law of the province as well as the discipline of the Society and a disorderly house endangered the proprietor's tavern license as well as his membership in the Society. However, after 1762, the Society began to dissuade Friends from keeping public houses, orderly or not. At that time the Society, and Philadelphia Friends in particular, became anxious about the proliferation of public houses and their evil consequences. In an address to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting stated "that the great number of dram-shops, taverns, and tipling-houses . . . abound in this city and country far beyond any necessity for them; which are become pernicious snares for the apparent ruin of a great number of thoughtless youth and others. . . ." Thereafter, the Monthly Meetings began discouraging individual Friends from undertaking the business of tavern-keeping. Those who refused were not regarded as delinquent persons because tavern-keeping was still not contrary to the discipline, but they were admonished. One couple pleaded that they kept an orderly house. Another man explained that his bodily disability prohibited any other occupation. The Monthly Meetings did not question these justifications. But when a woman who drank to excess got a license to open an ale house, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting disowned her. In 1776 a policy was formulated respecting the manufacture of liquor which anticipated the eventual policy of total abstinence. Bucks Quarterly Meeting recommended that Friends not distill liquor, sell grain to those who did, or purchase liquor.[27]

"Drunkenness . . . is an inlet to many other evils," remarked Abington Monthly Meeting. Perhaps half of the Friends accused of drunkenness had transgressed the discipline in some way other than by

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[27]Exeter MM min., 26-8-1756, 25-11-1756. Phila. MM min., 16-1-1762, 31-12-1762, 27-4-1764, 25-5-1764, 29-6-1764, 28-4-1769, 24-4-1774. Abington MM min., 28-5-1764, 30-1-1769, 27-11-1769. Falls MM min., 4-12-1776.

simple drunkenness. Drunken Friends did "ridiculous" things: a man was so drunk he was found lying dangerously in the public highway; a woman was "seen with a young man acting such things as are a shame for a woman to be found doing." Some situations proved tragic. A man made a wager concerning the amount he could drink. He was thereby "unexpectedly induced . . . to drink to excess which occasioned his death. . . ." Drunkenness was so often accompanied by other errors that Friends might easily conclude that drunkenness, the common denominator of the situations, was the cause of them all. Friends did not treat the drunkard leniently when he had committed other scandalous and evil acts.[28]

Although drunkenness accompanied the breach of almost every other article of discipline, it was more commonly linked with some than with others. Liquor "dismounts the Mind," wrote Penn, causing Friends to use immoderate and vain speech, curse, and swear. R. D. "called for damnation on himself if ever he married M. W. . . . which he afterward desired to do." R. H. used some "immoderate" expressions with the magistrate while he was drunk. Others cursed their companions and got into quarrels. Friends never condoned such behavior which was contrary to the sobriety and quietism of their religious profession, and "scandalous," in their words. Consequently, when a Friend guilty of drunkenness condemned his excesses, the Meeting published his papers among those who had witnessed the un-Friendly conduct, that the witnesses might know that Friends did not condone such conduct.[29]

Drunkenness was associated with debt almost as frequently as with immoderate speech. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting described this association in a member, who "by slothfulness in his business and associating with unprofitable company and sometimes being overtaken with excess in the use of strong drink, has contracted debts, which he is not able to pay. . . ." When the man was married and had a

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[28] Abington MM min., 26-1-1756, 25-11-1754, 22-2-1762. Chester MM min., 26-10-1720. Phila. MM min., 30-5-1736.

[29] Chester MM min., 25-7-1727. Middletown MM min., 1-5-1714. Goshen MM min., 7-4-1775. Concord MM min., 3-11-1736. Exeter MM min., 24-9-1766, 29-4-1772. Phila. MM min., 30-10-1690. Newgarden MM min., 29-5-1727.

family, his neglect of his profession and his indebtedness occasionally convinced Friends that he had prejudiced the care and welfare of the family. The most callous of these Quaker fathers abandoned their creditors, their Monthly Meetings, and their families.[30]

Some drunken Friends became aggressive and fought, often at taverns, or in the fields at harvest time when farmers supplied laborers with liquor during the long work days. More pathetic were the belligerent drunken men who disrupted their families when they abused them or even struck a wife or a child "a hurtfull blow."[31] When a drunken Friend compounded his offense by cursing, abusing another person, or some other evil, he appeared doubly or triply evil. The Monthly Meetings treated such offenders with dispatch. Friends were less certain of the guilt and less hasty with the man who had only gotten drunk.

J. G. explained to Exeter Monthly Meeting that he had had some grain to be ground and he set out

> one morning to a mill in Tulpehoccon, but my corn not being ground as I expected, was obliged to stay all night; and when morning I went home it was so very cold that I called at a Dutch man's house to warm myself and my lad at the stove; and the man seeing me very cold went and brought me some bread and a dram, and was urgent for me to eat; but notwithstanding I had not eaten anything from the morning before, I could not eat then. Then he persuaded me to take two or three drams, and that was the most; but however, it prove too much. . . .[32]

J. G. had committed no other offense, nor previously been guilty of drunkenness. His error was circumstantial and his regret sincere. The rarity and brevity of his offense made it forgivable; the man who once drank to excess, like the man who once cursed, owed a debt, or fought, was not therefore iniquitious and not to be divorced from the fellow-

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[30] Phila. MM min., 25-9-1761, 28-10-1750, 31-3-1758, 25-1-1760, 22-12-1750. Concord MM min., 5-4-1727, 3-4-1728. Middletown MM min., 6-3-1760.

[31] Exeter MM min., 25-11-1756, 28-4-1757, 30-6-1757. Concord MM min., 3-10-1744. Newgarden MM min., 5-2-1774, 25-11-1734. Goshen MM min., 10-4-1761.

[32] Exeter MM min., 28-3-1741.

ship of pious men and women. Yet drunkenness frequently appeared within a set of circumstances quite different from those of J. G. and created real difficulties for Friends.

Every drunkard who condemned his own conduct identified the blame as entirely his own and resolved to sin no more; every offender who was pardoned was judged sincere in his condemnation and adequate in his resolve. Despite their sincerity, and unlike J. G. above, some drunkards erred again. T. H., said Philadelphia Friends, "confessed his evil and appears to be under great convictions for the same, yet doth not refrain there from. . . ." W. F. "appears candid in an acknowledgment that he hath not yet overcome his weakness . . . yet expresses a desire that he may be continued under Friends care. . . ." Acknowledgment, remorse, humility, and petition characterized dozens of drunken men treated by the Society. They continued their evil and, when disowned, rarely displayed anger but instead, understanding and humility.[33]

More puzzling was the drunkenness of some Friends of acknowledged piety. J. M., a minister from Chester Monthly Meeting, repeatedly became drunk. Upon his third offense he went "riding about the country craving for it [liquor] and takeing it after a clandestine manner and when intoxicated therby presumptiously pretended to preach." M. K., the clerk of Concord Monthly Meeting, became drunk and did not desist. By their service to the Society and their witness to the "Light" in their ministry, they were counted among a select group of Friends. By the evidence of his sincere penance and his request to be forgiven, J. M. was repeatedly forgiven and readmitted. Yet both men went away from their Meetings and sinned again.[34]

Friends treated these recidivists with special patience, tacitly admitting that they were unlike other delinquents. For two or three

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[33]Phila. MM min., 24-11-1758, 29-12-1758, 11-6-1761. Abington MM min., 29-7-1754. Concord MM min., 4-5-1768 through 6-7-1768. Goshen MM min., 10-11-1775 through 8-3-1776, 20-7-1752 through 19-2-1753.

[34]Chester MM min., 28-12-1737, 7-1-1738, 30-4-1740, 25-11-1741, 22-12-1741, 25-12-1744. Concord MM min., 1-3-1756, ?-5-1756.

years Friends might visit a drunkard to counsel him, supply him with material aid if his drunkenness had incapacitated him, and await his reform.

D. E. of Philadelphia had stopped attending meetings, neglected his business and family, and was often drunk. Some Friends visited him officially in January 1760 and learned that he wanted to improve. In April the Meeting told him "to putt out his children" into other Quaker homes because he had not reformed. In the following six months he almost convinced Friends that he had reformed and was stable again, but in December he relapsed and would have been disowned had he not begged for forbearance. In June 1762 he condemned his condition which the Meeting accepted on trial of his conduct. By the end of the year he had completely relapsed. In January 1763, when he was almost disowned, he acknowledged the justice of the charges against him and again resolved to reform. Seven months later he was living a sober life and had recovered his business. Since he continued sober and industrious in the next year, the Meeting watched him less intently.[35]

D. E. was exceptional for the amount of time he was indulged and for his apparent reform. Most offenders were permitted less time or disowned before they had an opportunity to reform; they were treated like other recidivists. Although J. R. was visited and found "sensible of his misconduct," Abington Monthly Meeting, "fearing he may too soon fall into the like excess," disowned him "in order for clearing the Society from the imputations of cloaking . . . any under the like imputations." A. B. asked Goshen Monthly Meeting to help her. It waited eight months then disowned her when it foresaw no reform in her conduct. Other meetings disowned men and women who wanted to reform, but admitted that they could not accomplish it alone. Some of these Monthly Meetings, trusting in formalities, asked the delinquents for papers of condemnation. These Meetings seemed to regard the condemnations as the remedy for the evil; the man who condemned his habit thereby took the dosage of determination needed to abstain for the future.

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[35] Phila. MM min., 25-1-1760 through 27-7-1764. Also Phila. MM min., 28-1-1757 through 25-1-1760 and 19-9-1758 through 8-10-1761.

When he relapsed these Meetings pestered him for another condemnation. After two condemnations and three inebriations they usually disowned him for apparent hypocrisy. Falls Monthly Meeting, for example, immediately asked W. A. to condemn his drunken behavior. He did, but relapsed a year later and condemned his drunkenness again. When he relapsed fifteen months later, the Meeting ordered him to condemn it yet another time. He did, but relapsed six months later. Finally, he was disowned.[36] To regard the condemnation of chronic drunkenness like the condemnations of other evils, and to believe the only prerequisite to reform was an understanding of the evil confessed in a paper, was to bind oneself to disown the confessor when he relapsed. By contrast, some condemnations, like that of D. E. above, were not accepted until the delinquent had proved that he could abstain.

The practice throughout Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was to prolong the treatment of chronic drunkenness: a compromise between the immediate disownment and the lengthy indulgence. Superficially, drunkenness might resemble delinquent conduct in which error is by choice and design, and repeatedly so; but the chronic drunkard frequently proved that he drank not deliberately, but against his choice, impelled by a desire beyond his conscious will. When Friends extraordinarily indulged such men, they admitted that drunkards were not sinful in the manner that other men were sinful. Some Meetings quickly disowned drunkards because they did not recognize that the drunkards needed rehabilitation rather than homilies.

No two categories of errors demonstrate as pointedly as fornication and drunkenness the variation possible in Friends' treatment of delinquents. Whereas both fornication and drunkenness were errors of incontinence, fornication was often specified as "scandalous," was impatiently treated, inadequately proved, and severely punished. However, where drunkenness was alone at issue, the Society consistently showed a concern for the rehabilitation of the offender. Insofar as

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[36] Abington MM min., 26-6-1751. Goshen MM min., 20-2-1758, 16-10-1758, 17-11-1758. Falls MM min., 7-12-1757, 1-2-1758, 7-3-1759, 5-9-1759, 7-1-1761, 6-5-1761, 4-11-1761, 2-12-1761, 3-3-1722.

drunkenness was an impairment of the will or of the spirit, Friends attempted to remedy the deficiencies of their errant brothers, and, for some indigent drunkards, they ministered to the physical deficiencies as well. Such care required time, patience, and labor that Friends showed in respect to few other offenses, least of all fornication.

CHAPTER IV

THE LIFE OF DENIAL

Friends' "Conversation" -

Categorizing the errors of Friends by the articles of discipline that they violated creates the false impression that the discipline of the Society was only a series of prohibitions designed to deny rather than to create. The discipline had a positive or creative function as well, for it promoted the way of life that Friends desired.

The creative spirit of the discipline appears in the cases of men accused of vague, almost undefinable offenses: flirtations without fornication, liasons without adultery, strong speech without slander, anger without assault, and threats without violence. By observing the rules, a pharisaical Friend could avoid fornication, adultery, slander, and violence; but legalism could not preserve him from the undefined offenses against the spirit of the laws.

With prohibitions on pride, vanity, and immoderation, Friends wove a fine seine to separate the man of true religious spirit from profane spirits. Nominal Christians might avoid capital errors and practice the Golden Rule, but the true Christian of Friends' conception had an additional duty to respect God to the denial of himself, his fellow men, and the world. "The lawful self, which we are to deny," wrote Penn, "is that conveniency, ease, enjoyment and plenty which . . . when they are brought in competition to him . . . must not be preferred, they must be denied."[1]

The true Friend, possessing the Spirit of God, should not have

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[1]William Penn, No Cross, No Crown (Lindfield, England, 1834), p. 42.

to scrutinize the rules of discipline nor worry about common or undefined offenses, for the Spirit created in Friends the love and humility that preserved them from temptation to err and to violate the laws both written and unwritten. The man without the "meekness and self-denial" of Friends erred, was disowned, or, like R. R., "acknowledged the way to straight for him to walk in," and voluntarily withdrew.[2]

The man infused with the "Light" avoided error, yet perceived no diminution of his freedom of action. The only thing he forbore which other men enjoyed was sin, and sin was bondage. "Let not any deceive themselves with a false plea," states the discipline, "saying I will be left to my liberty . . . for that liberty which the worldly spirit leads into, is not true liberty, but a false liberty that leads into bondage; . . . true religion stands in that which sets a bound and a limit to the mind. . . ."[3]

"Conversation" was the term, now archaic, that Friends used to describe both the speech and actions of their members. When the style of life was contrary to Friends' "meekness and self-denial," the Monthly Meetings accused the delinquents of "loose conversation," "irregular and disorderly conversation," "unseemly conversation," "unbecoming conversation," and, most frequently, "vain conversation." Variations of the accusation included "loose and airy conduct," "disorderly walking," and "turbulent behaviour."[4]

The conduct of a Friend who almost violated the strictures on speech did so by "lighting of [dismounting from] his horse, and using the freedom of asking her [a Quakeress] how she liked marriage. . . ." The Monthly Meeting concluded that his question "might give her some room to make some report, but by all appeared to us, we do not find him

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[2] Phila. MM min., 26-2-1768. Gwynedd MM min., 26-1-1745.

[3] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, p. 51.

[4] Phila. MM min., 23-12-1710. Radnor MM min., ?-11-1724, 11-2-1717. Abington MM min., 25-2-1748. Concord MM min., 6-10-1731, 4-7-1732. Concord MM min., 9-4-1766. Abington MM min., 26-3-1712. Middletown MM min., 6-4-1706. Chester MM min., 28-8-1755.

guilty of the grossness chard [charged] by her against him."[5]

Profanity, obscenity, cursing, and swearing were more serious offenses than unsavoury speech; of these, swearing was the most grevious offense. W. M. complained to Sadsbury Monthly Meeting that it had charged him falsely; he was accused of swearing, but he maintained that he was guilty only of profanity. Exeter Monthly Meeting accused J. M. of using obscenity "when going down Schuylkill in a canoe." He was disowned because he treated the overseers with levity.[6]

Friends who merely threatened violence were prosecuted by their Monthly Meetings. Whether the threats sounded serious, as in the case of three Friends who threatened to shoot other men, or were only angry bombast, the delinquent Friends were almost always disowned.[7]

Two forms of language were forbidden to Friends: they could not use the pronoun "you" and they could not take an oath. The number of Pennsylvania Friends who were accused of using "you," or "disregarding scriptural language," was almost negligible--only eleven. (The Monthly Meetings may have apprehended this offense when they accused a member of "vain language.") The offensive use of "you" was usually linked with other shows of un-Friendly conduct. I. T., for example, also "takes off his hat and bows by way of complement."[8]

Likewise, there were few violations of the prohibition on oaths. (The swearing that occurred, mentioned above, was profane swearing, not oath-taking.) Of twelve violators, only one took an oath; the others administered oaths as a duty of a public office.

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[5]Newgarden MM min., 26-5-1759.

[6]Abington MM min., 29-12-1755, 30-4-1759, 27-1-1772. Exeter MM min., 27-5-1772. Sadsbury MM min., 19-1-1774. Exeter MM min., 28-4-1757.

[7]Bradford MM min., 18-9-1767, 18-12-1767. Concord MM min., 6-11-1776. Falls MM min., 6-1-1717, 3-2-1717. Goshen MM min., 10-7-1744, 7-12-1764, 8-3-1764. Phila. MM min., 24-12-1776. Sadsbury MM min., 17-2-1768, 23-8-1769.

[8]Concord MM min., 7-1-1743, 7-6-1749.

Seven of the offenders replied to their Monthly Meetings that they found nothing blameworthy in administering oaths and refused to desist. Few articles of the discipline caused as many recriminations.[9]

Accusations against actions by Friends were as miscellaneous as the accusations against speech. Chester Friends thought R. C. kept a disorderly household and suffered people of bad reputation to visit him. M. H. spent his time in "vain company." D. D., Sr., kept "bad company." W. Y. associated with "wicked and prophane company." When J. P. denied the accusation of Abington Friends that he kept bad company, they undertook an investigation. Two witnesses said they had seen him at a tavern with the objectionable company. J. P. had used his handkerchief to hide his face from these witnesses, who hailed him by name. He replied that he was not the man they sought and departed, but later returned wearing a different coat for disguise. One witness said that after the encounter, J. P. asked him to suppress his evidence. When the witness refused, J. P. threatened to fight with him. J. P. was disowned because "Truth and the Society may suffer reproach."[10]

Often the objectionable company was female. Friends apprehended men Friends who associated with "scandalous" women, "lewd" women, "women of known bad character," and "women of ill fame." No woman was charged with associating with a man of bad character, although one behaved immodestly with some soldiers at a public house.[11]

The Society was most sensitive to the licentious conduct of married Friends. S. J. was disowned for too frequently being in the com-

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[9]Almost all these recriminations occurred in 1758 and later when Philadelphia Yearly Meeting decided that Friends occupying positions in government which entailed duties in conflict with the religious testimonies of Friends must decline those offices. The seven offenders were not described as officeholders, yet probably did occupy offices which entailed the administering of oaths.

[10]Chester MM min., 30-7-1744. Middletown MM min., 4-9-1710. Phila. MM min., 28-2-1763. Abington MM min., 21-9-1767.

[11]Radnor MM min., ?-8-1772, 14-6-1747. Falls MM min., 4-10-1751. Phila. Northern District MM min., 24-5-1774. Goshen MM min., 17-11-1758.

pany of another woman's husband. J. C. was disowned for keeping company with another man's wife, although he denied that there was any occasion for reproach. S. C. and J. E. were together too often and Friends warned them to cease visiting each other. J. E. said he would visit her any time a "necessity" occurred. Three months later, Radnor Monthly Meeting disowned them both because the "necessity" was occurring whenever S. C.'s husband was absent. Some men Friends "offered . . . indecency" to married women, or behaved unseemly toward them. S. J. was indecent with a woman whose husband he was then sueing. J. M. explained to Exeter Monthly Meeting that he acted indecently with M. P. in order to learn if she were an honest woman or not, and since he had conducted his test in private, he refused to acknowledge it publicly. He was disowned.[12]

Acquaintanceships between unmarried men and women might provoke reprimands if the conduct of the couples became suspicious. M. V. and S. H. were disowned for "keeping company at unseasonable hours and in an unbecoming way," and R. W., for "unseemly keeping company." Usually, the male Friend was the party suspected or guilty of indecent behavior. T. I., for example, condemned his "unbecoming expressions and foolish behaviour" toward S. H. A few men were warned for too frequently keeping company with non-Quaker girls.[13]

Pride and Vanity

"The cross of Christ . . . will crucify that nature, which delights in finery of apparel," states the discipline; " . . . where there is . . . vanity of apparel, it is a certain token, the mind is

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[12] Uwchlan MM min., 9-8-1770. Phila. MM min., 27-4-1770, 31-8-1770, 31-8-1770, 4-10-1770. Radnor MM min., 10-4-1764, 14-6-1764, 10-8-1764, 13-9-1764. Gwynedd MM min., 25-3-1742. Phila. MM min., 29-2-1726. Goshen MM min., 21-3-1757. Exeter MM min., 29-9-1757, 26-1-1758, 27-4-1758.

[13] Chester MM min., 29-7-1729, 30-1-1730. Abington MM min., 30-3-1772, 29-7-1712. Concord MM min., 8-1-1766. Sadsbury MM min., 17-4-1771.

got loose . . . and is not subject to . . . divine power. . . ."[14] Vanity of dress, like vain speech and conduct, proved to Friends that the "Inner Light" was not a man's guild, and that the member who was preoccupied with such worldly things should not belong to the humble community of Friends.

Translating the humble leading of the "Light" into practical advice on the costume of Friends proved more difficult for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Friends than for their nineteenth-century descendants. Not until the nineteenth century did Friends simplify their task of preventing vanities of dress by maintaining a somewhat uniform, plain garb. In the colonial period they prohibited selected displays of vanity, but never demanded uniformity.[15]

In 1695 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ordered that

> . . . none wear long lapp'd sleeves or coates gathered at the sides, or superfluous buttons, or broad ribbons about their hatts, or long curled perriwiggs and that no women, their children, or servants, dress their heads immodestly, or wear their garments undecently . . . nor wear long scarves, and that all be careful about making, buying or wearing (as much as they can) striped or flower'd stuffs, or other useless and superfluous things. . . .[16]

When Friends complained in 1698 that the objectionable clothing was "imposed" upon them by foreign traders, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting requested of London Yearly Meeting that English merchants send no "flowerd, striped or gaudy stuff, fringed curtains, ribbon that bands, needless furniture for horses. . . ."[17] In 1700 English Friends again caused complaint in Philadelphia: "It being spoken at this meeting, as a grief upon some friends, that many comes out of England with fashionable clothes and great perriwigs, which if care be not taken may, its feared, tend to corrupt the youth of this place.

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[14] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, p. 51.

[15] Tolles, Meeting House, p. 126.

[16] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 18-7-1695.

[17] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 21-7-1698.

. . . ."[18]

The Friends of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting attacked the vanity of dress at a critical point. The Meeting resolved

> that some care be taken with the taylors that make profession of truth and are found in the practice of making such fashionable clothing as tends to the corruption of youth and breaking the good order of truth this meeting appointeth . . . [ten Friends] to give notice to all taylors belonging to this meeting . . . to have some conference with them about the aforesaid matter.[19]

Until 1702 advices on the costume of Friends were issued two and three times annually; thereafter, new instructions rarely appeared.

For several decades after 1720 contemporary Pennsylvanians and visitors to Philadelphia observed that the dress, homes, and furnishings of Philadelphia Friends rivaled the best that any wealthy Philadelphian had acquired.[20] For some conspicuous, wealthy Friends, the "nature that delights in finery" eclipsed the spirit of self-denial.

Another outlet for pride in the eyes of Friends was the erection of tombstones in burial grounds. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting explained that

> the vanity and superstition, of erecting monuments and entombing the dead, with singular notes or marks of distinction which is but worldly pomp and grandure: for no encomiums, nor pompous interments add worth to the deceased.[21]

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting ordered "that Friends forbear for the future putting up any monuments or palings in the burying ground, for keeping up the memory of the dead, believing that the righteous shall be laid in everlasting remembrance with the Lord." Concord Monthly Meeting further demanded that its members desist from the "superflus practise of putting names and dates upon coffins."[22]

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[18] Phila. MM min., 26-2-1700.

[19] Phila. MM min., 25-5-1701.

[20] Tolles, Meeting House, pp. 126-128. Carl and Jessica Bridenbaugh, Rebels and Gentlemen (New York, 1962), pp. 180-183.

[21] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 20-7-1729, 16-7-1732.

[22] Phila. MM min., 22-12-1705. Concord MM min., 1-7-1729.

In only one case was a member disowned for erecting a tombstone, but he had committed additional offenses. The prohibition on tombstones was advice, not an article of discipline enforced with disownment. Friends did not neglect the prohibition because it was only advice, however. For three years after Philadelphia Yearly Meeting drafted the caution on tombstones, quoted above, it received reports from the Quarterly Meetings on their progress in removing all tombstones. Falls Monthly Meeting labored two years to convince its delinquents to remove the monuments that they had erected. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting was less patient; it threatened to remove the gravedigger from his job if he helped erect a tombstone.[23]

Recreation

Robert Barclay wrote in his Quaker classic, An Apology for the True Christian Divinity

> That it is not lawful to use games, sports, plays, nor among other things comedies among Christians, under the notion of recreations, which do not agree with Christian silence, gravity, and sobriety: for laughing, sporting, gaming, mocking, jesting, vain talking, &c. is not Christian liberty, nor harmless mirth.[24]

William Penn concluded that "Such who . . . seek to be refreshed by such pastimes as a play . . . a ball, a masque, cards, dice or the like . . . never knew the divine excellence of God. . . ."[25] Friends therefore disowned from their community men and women who showed an affinity for the delights of the profahe world. The prosecutions of alleged hedonists occasionally appear arbitrary and whimsical because Friends had to decide when legitimate pleasures ("little things in

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[23]Wrightstown MM min., 4-3-1766, 1-7-1766. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 16-7-1732. Falls MM min., 4-1-1772, 7-9-1774. Phila. MM min., 27-4-1753. Chester MM min., 25-10-1732.

[24]Robert Barclay, An Apology for the True Christian Divinity (New York, 1826), pp. 514, 515.

[25]William Penn, No Cross, No Crown, p. 259.

appearance, but great in consequence") became pernicious and turned a man's soul from its heavenly bent.[26]

Gambling and the activities incidental to it--lotteries, horse racing, and shooting matches--were forbidden. Although successful gamblers were often required to return their winnings before they could be pardoned, success did not make the venture evil and failure did not excuse it; gambling revealed "desire for unjust gain," and was immediate evidence of coveting earthly riches.[27] Friends were also prosecuted for permitting gambling to occur at their homes and, some Friends who operated public houses, in those houses.[28]

The public lotteries in the province of Pennsylvania worried Friends, not only because the lotteries induced Friends to violate the prohibitions of their own Society, but also for the pernicious effect on all the citizens of the province. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting sent an address to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania in 1762 maintaining that lotteries

> are extremely injurious to many inhabitants, who are tempted to risque their quiet, and some, most of their small substance, in an anxious pursuit after exorbitant gain, to the discouragement of honest industry.[29]

The damage caused by lotteries, said Friends, exceeded the good effects to which the profits from the lotteries were employed. In one of their own members Friends found an example of the corruption of lotteries. Philadelphia Friends caught J. H. attempting to alter the number on his lottery ticket after he had found that he had a losing number.[30]

Friends prohibited horse racing and attendance at horse races whether or not Friends used the races as occasions to gamble. Since

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[26] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, p. 53.

[27] Phila. MM min., 27-8-1762.

[28] Phila. MM min., 29-4-1763. Wrightstown MM min., 1-4-1760. Phila. MM min., 25-2-1763, 24-11-1752.

[29] Phila. MM min., 16-1-1762.

[30] Phila. MM min., 25-6-1762.

70 per cent of the Friends accused of attending the horse races were also accused of betting on the entrants, the delinquent Friends appeared to have taken as much interest in profit as in horses.

In the rural areas outside of Philadelphia, shooting matches were popular and offered an additional occasion for gambling. The Friends who were concerned in shooting matches were probably a less avaricious group than those concerned in horse racing; more than 70 per cent of the accused simply attended the matches, neither entering them for the prizes nor wagering on the contestants. But like horse races, shooting matches were forbidden to Friends.

Card-playing seems to have been a pastime rather than a form of gambling, for no card-players were accused of gambling. One Friend was accused of complicity in card-playing because he had held the cards for a player.[31]

Gamblers and card-players were few; less than ninety such offenders are recorded in the minutes of the Society in colonial Pennsylvania. Slightly more numerous were the Friends accused of more commonplace activities such as dancing, musical activities, and theater attendance.

The Society prosecuted Friends for making music, tolerating music, dancing to music, and selling musical instruments. Bradford Monthly Meeting accused S. B. of "keeping and useing a fiddle." J. K. kept a disorderly house "willfully suffering musick and dancing therein." S. T. invited some people into her home on the pretence that it was her birthday and then danced with them. Three members of Abington Monthly Meeting attended a "dancing and fiddling frolick." Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, having apprehended a member selling jews-harps, "desired . . . that he may take the said Jews harps again, and return their money to them, that he sold them to, and that they may be sent whence they came. . . ."[32]

On seven occasions Friends objected to members who sang or

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[31] Newgarden MM min., 12-4-1725, 6-6-1725.

[32] Bradford MM min., 12-12-1766. Darby MM min., 5-10-1757. Goshen MM min., 16-1-1758. Abington MM min., 31-3-1766, 28-4-1766. Phila. MM min., 13-8-1696.

whistled. J. B., for example, was "in the practice of whistling and singing in a light airy manner." Because six of the seven offenders were accused of offenses in addition to singing, there is no certain proof that the Society disapproved of ordinary singing.[33]

Other miscellaneous offenders included two Friends who were "Wrassling," one who "practiced the reading of vain and idle books." A. B. condemned "casting quoits near Charles Sobers house." Two Friends were ordered to show A. B.'s confession "to the Sobers family that they may understand Friends do not allow of and Truth's testimony is against such things." Philadelphia Monthly Meeting became anxious when it learned that some young men Friends were erecting a building "which is said to be intended for a house of recreation or diversion and commonly known by the name of Batchelors Hall. . . ."[34]

The Society of Friends, allied with the Presbyterians, unsuccessfully attempted to keep theater companies out of Philadelphia. By 1759 Friends had lost the battle and the theater became a regular feature of Philadelphia culture. A company permanently settled in the city in 1767. In 1760 the first Friend was arraigned for attending the theater; thereafter, the offenses increased. One Friend was disowned in 1768 for helping to construct the new Cedar Street theater in south Philadelphia.[35]

In 1762 and 1766 Philadelphia Monthly Meeting petitioned the General Assembly and governor of Pennsylvania to prohibit the theater; in 1768 it printed 1000 copies of an advice against the theater. The anxiety of the Meeting was not warranted by the few violations of the prohibition on attendance; only twelve Friends were prosecuted between

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[33] Bradford MM min., 17-8-1764. Exeter MM min., 26-8-1756. Newgarden MM min., 31-6-1728. Uwchlan MM min., 4-10-1764, 10-1-1765. Falls MM min., 6-1-1775.

[34] Newgarden MM min., 26-2-1729. Abington MM min., 22-9-1766. Newgarden MM min., 29-1-1735. Phila. MM min., 25-5-1701, 31-5-1730.

[35] William S. Dye, "Pennsylvania Versus the Theater," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LV (1931), 333-372. Bridenbaugh, pp. 137-140. Phila. MM min., 30-10-1767.

1760 and 1776 for attending.[36]

The other public function that annoyed Friends was the public fair, and especially the Chester County Fair. "It is often observed," remarked Philadelphia Friends, "that indulgence is given to children and servants to go to fairs without any necessary business, by which they are in great danger of being corrupted by evil conversation. . . ." Friends did not attempt to prohibit fairs, as they did the theater, but advised the members against them, and, in the case of Chester Monthly Meeting, appointed Friends to attend the fair and observe the conduct of any members they found there.[37]

The conduct of Friends at weddings and funerals disturbed the Society. Weddings were supposed to be solemn occasions and funerals were supposed to be sober. In eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, weddings became festive and sumptuous occasions. For two weeks the engaged couple held tea parties and feted everyone in the neighborhood with liquor, punch, cakes, and meats. In the towns outside of Philadelphia, a couple would set a table in the street and treat all the passersby. Friends also feted their acquaintences when a couple passed the Monthly Meeting and received permission to marry. The wealth of many Philadelphia Friends magnified the munificence of the urban wedding celebrations. These displays violated the spirit and demand of the discipline, which states

> that any excess in this case; and the making of so solemn a time, as this [a wedding] ought to be and really is in its own nature; to appear as a festival; must be burdensome and grevious; to the sober Christian mind. . . .

When the overseers reported a disorderly wedding feast to Newgarden Monthly Meeting, the Meeting recorded the disorder "is cause of sorrow to think that any thing of lightness . . . should possess the minds of any upon such or any other occasion." Despite Friends' grief at the appearance of such excess, they never prosecuted anyone for such immod-

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[36] Phila. MM min., 16-1-1762, 27-6-1766, 25-8-1768.

[37] Phila. MM min., 25-5-1759. Chester MM min., 30-2-1716.

eration.[38]

Equally disturbing was the lack of sobriety at burials. Without intending to make burials festive occasions, some Friends began serving liquor and food to the mourners, until even "the very streets and open places are made use of for the handing about burnt wine and other strong liquors. . . ." The practice, wrote Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, "hath been a grief to many friends, as also the disorderly walking in the streets with corpses to the burying ground. . . ." Later, the Meeting appointed a Friend to attend and oversee all burials. Abington Monthly Meeting demanded that there be no second servings of liquor "which prolong the time appointed, and that the corps be taken out and carried away in one hour and a half at farthest." The Monthly Meetings prosecuted several Friends who became drunk at burials, but never charged a Friend with providing excess liquor and food or with prolonging the burial.[39]

Although Friends did not regard the sabbath as a hallowed occasion, they showed some concern to promote solemnity on "first days" and to observe the sabbath. Goshen Monthly Meeting disowned G. T. for working "at common business" on first days, sleeping in meeting, and preaching when not permitted. Two Chester County Friends were apprehended "reaping on first day." Two other Friends had shot off guns on first day and one of them was fined by a magistrate for doing so.[40] Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting advised its members

> to restrain them [their children] from associating together for amusement or diversion on the first days of the week in the afternoon, as it is much feared the good impression made on their attending the meetings for worship in the morning, are too frequently lost or diminished by unprofitable behaviour, to prevent

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[38]Howard, Matrimonial Institutions, II, 325-326. Gwynedd MM MS Extracts from the Discipline, Dept. of Records, p. 59. Newgarden MM min., 4-5-1765.

[39]Chester MM MS Book of Discipline, Dept of Records, pp. 11-12. Phila. MM min., 26-10-1690, 26-8-1716. Abington MM min., 24-7-1750.

[40]Goshen MM min., 6-7-1764. Chester MM min., 8-7-1789. Bradford MM min., 20-2-1752. Falls MM min., 8-10-1760.

> which, it is recommended to parents . . . to call their families together and spend the afternoon either in humble waiting on Almighty God, or in reading the Holy Scripture the writings of our ancient Friends or other edifying books.[41]

In 1735 the Friends of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting formally complained to the mayor and aldermen of the city of the profanation of the first day by "the lower rank of people, servants, and Negroes."[42]

Sometimes Friends who played practical jokes found themselves prosecuted by their Monthly Meetings for their jokes. J. W. dressed a man like a corpse and brought him into D. C.'s house to frighten the people there. The Friends at Chester Monthly Meeting made J. W. condemn his practical joke as though he had seriously broken the discipline. Newgarden Friends treated D. B. with the same sober disapproval because he had hidden near Londongrove meetinghouse and made strange noises to scare the Friends there.[43]

After the authors of the discipline and apostles like Penn and Barclay had denied to Friends most of the pastimes of secular society they did not leave their brethren entirely without suggestions for lawful recreation. Barclay wrote

> there are innocent divertisments which may sufficiently serve for relaxation of the mind such as for Friends to visit one another; to hear or read history; to speak soberly of the present or past transactions; to follow after gardening; to use geometrical and mathematical experiments, and such things of this nature.[44]

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[41] Phila. MM min., 25-5-1759. Although the discipline required attendance at first day and weekday meetings, and although Friends continually commented that members were lethargic in attending, the Society very rarely prosecuted a member for simple inattendance. Inattendance was frequently specified as an accessory error to some other error (drunken Friends frequently neglected to attend), and regularity of attendance was employed to test the penance of a Friend who had erred and requested pardon.

[42] Phila. MM min., 28-7-1733.

[43] Chester MM min., 25-2-1715, 30-3-1715. Newgarden MM min., 26-6-1727. Richland MM min., 19-9-1765, 17-10-1765.

[44] Barclay, p. 541.

Many Friends, probably most of them, took to heart advice such as Barclay's. Although Pennsylvania Friends were not ascetics, they were, on the whole, more puritanical and modest in behavior than other Pennsylvanians, who themselves had a reputation for sobriety and industry. The professions of some Friends and the avocations of others displayed an interest in the subjects that Barclay recommended; a considerable number of Friends became doctors, naturalists, and scientists.[45]

Equally certain, a conspicuous minority of Friends--usually the wealthy, if the accounts of contemporary Pennsylvanians are accurate--were not the paragons of Robert Barclay (although they all read his Apology). These wealthy Friends married with a gregarious show of plenty, lived in elegant, unadorned homes, and dressed modestly in the finest cloth. They could have afforded more, and the moderation they managed to show, to their minds, distinguished them from their less inhibited, non-Quaker neighbors, and identified them as Friends. Their behavior identified them not only as Friends but as bad ones, for their selected shows of modesty proved they subscribed to the discipline which indicted them for the rules that they ignored. Obedient Friends were still numerous enough that the historic Quaker standard was maintained and that non-Friends as well as Friends recognized the difference between it and the hypocrisy of the delinquents.

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[45] Tolles, pp. 161-228.

CHAPTER V

VIOLENCE

Assault and battery occurred infrequently among the Friends in Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, the one with the largest membership in the Yearly Meeting, had only twenty-four cases of assault in ninety-four years. Goshen Monthly Meeting, with fifty-two cases, recorded more offenses than any other Monthly Meeting.[1] Very few of these crimes involved serious physical harm to the victim; no Friend committed murder or manslaughter.

The disparity between the number of assaults in Goshen and those in Philadelphia illustrates the predominance of violent acts in the rural areas of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Abington Monthly Meeting, the Meeting closest to Philadelphia and second to Philadelphia in membership and urbanization, recorded fifteen offenses. Several rural Monthly Meetings, all of which had less than one-half the membership of Abington and slightly more than one-fifth that of Philadelphia, recorded the following number of offenses: Chester, 18; Concord, 17; Middletown, 19; Newgarden, 24.

Excluding military activities, the Society was no stricter with violators of the nonviolent ethic than with the violators of any other aspect of the discipline, pardoning almost one-half of the assailants.

Violence within the home apprehended by the Monthly Meetings in Pennsylvania was usually directed toward the servants; thirteen Friends in the colonial period were disciplined for this abuse and six of them were disowned. S. B., a woman Friend, was violent with her servants "espesally with a servant boy which her honeist neighbours says they

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[1] These figures do not include acts of violence against Indians and enemies of the state during periods of warfare.

are afraid will suffer much before any corse can be taken." J. W. denied that he abused his servants and claimed that the marks the overseers allegedly found on the backs of his servants might have been inflicted by someone else, or by the servants upon each other. J. B. and his wife "inhumanly" abused their servants.[2]

Some differences between neighbors progressed beyond recriminations: J. G. threw his neighbor to the ground and rubbed dirt into his mouth; J. A. kicked his neighbor several times in public. Three men Friends did not restrain themselves because the offensive neighbors were women, one kicking his neighbor's wife, the second abusing his neighbor "in a very brutish . . . manner," and the third "designedly spitting several times into the face of a woman that lives near him." All were disowned. One Quaker landlord forcefully evicted a tenant from his house and another assaulted his tenant while arguing with him. A Philadelphia man assaulted a city watchman. In 1765 a Quaker farmer, while working in a harvest field, struck "a Negro man so hard as to fell him," yet refused to condemn his assault because he did not find striking a Negro a blameworthy act.[3]

James Logan, who maintained that he could be a good Quaker and still make use of force, exhibited his inconsistency when, as Commissioner of Property of Pennsylvania, he performed the duty of evicting a squatter, but as a Quaker he later condemned his erronious use of force. He had taken the sheriff and a group of armed men to an island in the Delaware River off Philadelphia and forcefully evicted the New Jersey squatter. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting thought "he ought to have gone in a peaceful manner, according to the profession

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[2]Middletown MM min., 1-7-1720. Chester MM min., 28-1-1720. Concord MM min., 6-2-1741. The minutes never describe whether the "servants" were white indentured servants or Negro chattel slaves.

[3]Goshen MM min., 11-10-1765, 10-3-1769. Concord MM min., 6-6-1744. Chester MM min., 26-5-1760. Phila. MM min., 26-5-1751. Abington MM min., 27-12-1756. Falls MM min., 5-11-1742. Phila. MM min., 26-3-1773. Goshen MM min., 11-10-1765.

he makes."[4]

Six Friends joined or were privy to mischievous or malicious mob violence. Two of these Friends, brothers, were observed among a mob of people who mischievously tore down J. B.'s mill dam. After the witnesses were further questioned, they were only certain that one brother was wet and that the other was at the scene of the violence. Middletown Monthly Meeting made the brothers condemn being spectators. More seriously, S. C. joined a mob which tore down a house where people were living; and J. M., a mob which taunted a man into leaving his home, and threw stones at the man and his family. In a bizarre incident, R. J. "joined with others in forcing a poor woman from her habitation under pretence of her bewitching a certain child," and harmed the woman.[5]

Quaker Samaritans learned that the Society disapproved of service to one's fellowmen when the service involved the use of force. J. P. struck his neighbor while attempting to separate him and another man with whom he was fighting. Goshen Monthly Meeting demanded that he condemn his action. Six Friends from Concord Monthly Meeting corrected a man whom they found beating his wife. All six condemned their assistance.[6]

Self-defense did not excuse acts of violence. J. G., the owner of the mill dam which the two brothers from Middletown Monthly Meeting observed the mob destroy, was a Friend and member of Middletown Meeting. The Meeting made J. G. condemn his forceful attempt to prevent the mob from destroying his dam.[7]

The most notorious single occasion when Friends violated the

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[4]Frederick B. Tolles, James Logan and the Culture of Provincial Pennsylvania (Boston, 1957), pp. 28, 155, 210. Phila. MM min., 28-6-1702, 25-10-1702.

[5]Middletown MM min., 7-8-1766, 4-9-1766, 9-10-1766, 4-12-1766, 1-1-1767. Newgarden MM min., 6-1-1776. Bradford MM min., 16-8-1746. Goshen MM min., 17-12-1759, 7-3-1760.

[6]Goshen MM min., 15-7-1740. Concord MM min., 3-1-1740.

[7]Middletown MM min., 5-6-1766, 9-10-1766.

discipline on nonviolence occurred in February 1764 when the Paxton boys marched on Philadelphia. Indian attacks upon these Pennsylvania frontiersmen had provoked them to retaliate indiscriminately upon all Indians, including a tribe of harmless Conestoga Indians living near Lancaster, Pennsylvania, whom the frontiersmen almost exterminated. Other friendly Indians were spared similar genocide by taking the Indians to Philadelphia and locating them on islands and ships in the Delaware River, out of reach of the frontiersmen and their Philadelphia sympathizers. Israel Pemberton, clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and conciliator, apologist, and protector of the Indians since 1754, directed the Indian exodus to Philadelphia. The frontiersmen, or Paxton boys, marched to Philadelphia to seize the Indians and Pemberton, whom they regarded as a conspirator and a traitor. Five hundred or more Paxton boys crossed the Schulykill River en route to Philadelphia while Philadelphians mustered cannon, muskets, and swords to receive the invasion. Among the defenders of Philadelphia were some 140 Friends, mostly young men, who disregarded their pacifism to protect the persons and cause that their Society had espoused. The Paxton boys never arrived in Philadelphia and violence was avoided. However, the political critics of the Society of Friends and the Pemberton policy of conciliation with the Indians made propaganda of the show of arms by young Friends. After pleading the prudence of nonviolent response to the Indian attacks and refusing aid for defense because of their own religious scruples, Friends were deeply embarrassed by the accusation that the proximity of the violence, not religious principles, determined Quaker conduct.[8]

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting labored earnestly to remove the hypocrites and the taint of hypocrisy from their community. A month after the alarm of February 1764, the Meeting appointed a special committee to investigate the men who had taken up arms and separate the contrite from the nonpacifists. Almost every month for the fol-

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[8]Theodore Thayer, Israel Pemberton, King of the Quakers (Philadelphia, 1943), pp. 188, 189. Theodore Thayer, Pennsylvania Politics and the Growth of Democracy (Harrisburg, Pa., 1953), p. 88.

lowing three years the committee reported its progress with the delinquent young Friends. In April 1765 the committee dismissed the penitent men and some thirty-two who were minors, but continued with the unrepentant for another two years. Some individuals were referred to the overseers for treatment and six of these publicly condemned their errors.[9]

With few exceptions, Friends escaped the violence of the French and Indian attacks, 1754-1763, because of their remoteness from the frontier. Exeter Monthly Meeting, located in Berks County north of Reading, was one of the few areas where Friends were threatened by the Indians and where some responded by taking up arms, allegedly in self-defense. Five Exeter members were prosecuted and four disowned. One member of the Boone family actually killed one or more Indians in self-defense; the other offenders only carried arms to protect themselves.[10]

Because Pennsylvania, before 1754, experienced little trouble from the Indians and avoided significant contributions of troops to the campaigns with the French, the Quakers in the province never had their pacifism severely tested until the French and Indian War. Several Friends had employed arms on the Pennsylvania frontier, but that was in self-defense; and some had become privateers in King George's War, but they were too few to be troublesome. However, after 1755 Pennsylvania received the brunt of war, as New England and the South had in previous decades and the pacifists were caught between alien enemies in the west and domestic political enemies in Pennsylvania and in the British Parliament. In the quarter-century after 1755 the Society was asked to discard irrevocably its pacifist ethic for the prosecution of war, and individual Friends were urged to volunteer with their neighbors and countrymen. The Society never retreated from its defense of the pacifist ethic, yet it grieved to learn how numerous were the defectors in the years of trial.[11]

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[9] Phila. MM min., 30-3-1764 through 29-5-1767.

[10] Exeter MM min., 29-9-1757, 29-12-1763, 24-2-1757, 29-3-1764, 27-12-1764, 1-4-1765.

[11] Thayer, Chapter VI.

In the French and Indian War, eighty-eight Friends enlisted in the army, twenty-nine engaged in privateering, and thirty-three indirectly promoted the war. By comparison with more normal breaches of discipline, these offenders were treated severely; 78 per cent of those who enlisted in the army and privateered were disowned. The members who had indirectly assisted the war were almost all Bucks County Friends guilty of procuring wagons and horses for the military expedition of General John Forbes to Fort Duquesne. Most of these Friends claimed they had not perceived that lending such assistance violated the discipline on pacifism, but having been advised that it did, condemned their error. One member who was disowned had been employed in constructing forts on the frontier and was captured by the French and Indians.[12]

Most of the privateering Friends were seamen who had shipped aboard privateers, although several merchants were involved, either by fitting out ships for privateering or owning such ships. S. H. had been fitting out ships for war and when apprehended by Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, explained that the owners of the ships demanded the ships be armed. He himself, he protested, believed in pacifism; but when he nevertheless continued arming ships, the Meeting disowned him. Three other Philadelphia Friends accused of promoting privateering were pardoned because they explained that they only owned shares in the ship and, if they could not have the armament removed from the ship, they would sell their shares.[13]

The American Revolution had a far greater impact upon the Society than the French and Indian War. In the years 1775 and 1776 alone, almost 300 Friends engaged in military activity. From the outset of the Revolution through December 1776, 293 Friends enlisted in the army, twelve lent assistance in miscellaneous ways, and one became a privateer. Of these offenders almost 89 per cent of those accused of enlisting for military service were disowned; the Society was less lenient in

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[12]Falls MM min., 6-9-1758 through 4-6-1760. Phila. MM min., 25-5-1759, 29-2-1760.

[13]Phila. MM min., 26-12-1760, 10-6-1762.

the Revolution than in the French and Indian War.[14] Two other differences exist between the Revolution and the French and Indian War: first, there were twenty-nine Friends involved in privateering in the earlier conflict and only one in the Revolution; secondly, twenty-two of the eighty-eight Friends who enlisted in the earlier conflict were accused of additional breaches of the discipline, whereas in the Revolution, only seventeen of the 293 enlistees were so accused.

The indirect assistance lent by Friends in the Revolution encompassed all activity that involved the use of force and almost all that obstructed the authority of the British government: mercantile boycotts, committees of the Continental Association, militia offices, or positions of authority in the revolutionary provincial government. In one of the earliest notices of such prohibited acitivity, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting noted that

> We have likewise taken some pains to advise and caution such professors among us, who have shown a disposition to countenance or join in with the people in their public associations, formed with a view of asserting and maintaining the civil liberties of the colonies, in opposition to some late Acts of Parliament, it being as we apprehend very inconsistent with the peaceable principle of our Christian profession . . . to pursue or approve of such methods as have been proposed . . . for obtaining a redress of greviances they complain of; And we have the satisfaction to find that most of those who were . . . prevailed upon to compose part of a Committee appointed by the traders of this city to superintend some affairs of a mercantile nature . . . have withdrawn from that trust. . . .[15]

Most of the offenders had joined local revolutionary committees in 1775. Uwchlan Monthly Meeting disowned a member for attending a convention to change the government "which in its consequences must be attended with wars and bloodshed." In 1776 an Abington Friend was disowned for repairing guns for the military.[16]

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[14]This calculation excludes several offenders apprehended late in 1776 whose cases had not reached judgement before January 1777.

[15]Phila. MM min., 4-10-1770.

[16]Phila. Southern District MM min., 1-2-1775. Uwchlan MM min., 5-9-1776. Abington MM min., 25-11-1776.

Friends almost never placed upon the minutes of meeting any comment about delinquent persons irrelevant to their offense or any personal reaction of Friends to the loss of persons disowned. However, the disownments at the outset of the American Revolution provoked them to display emotion, which is some measure of the impact of that event upon the Society. The clerk of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting recorded in May 1755 that

> after a time of silent waiting under a sense of the present close tryals attending, and the sorrowful defection of many from the peaceable principles of our religious profession, some observations were made and exhortations given tending to excite a weighty humble seeking for Divine help in order for a faithful discharge of our duty in support of our Christian testimony.[17]

From an interview with a particular offender, a committeeman reported that since "he [the offender] did not join with Friends in their testimony against war, it cannot be but painful to find him in this disposition. . . ." A like case was "sorrowfully affecting" to the Meeting. One man who was disowned asked the Meeting to keep his wife and children in its care, and it agreed.[18]

The committees appointed by Philadelphia and other Monthly Meetings to confer with the offenders reported on several occasions that most offenders appreciated the concern of the Society and that no acrimony existed between Society and delinquents. "Their visits appeared to be kindly received," Philadelphia Monthly Meeting recorded in December, 1775, "but although some of them [the offenders] expressed their thoughts of declining the practices, they were so candid as to acknowledge, it proceeded not from a convincement of their error. . . ." The following month, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting disowned eighteen men at one session, a number unequalled in any one session in the colonial period. The magnitude of the deviation, the near complete lack of acrimony in the proceedings, the absence of conviction of guilt, the steadfastness of the delinquents in their error and the

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[17] Phila. MM min., 26-5-1775.

[18] Phila. MM min., 26-4-1776, 31-5-1776.

Society in its prosecution, and the tragic sympathy shown by prosecutor and defendants for each other, were unparalleled in colonial Quaker experience, distinguishing the Revolutionary experience from earlier conflicts, making it unique in the history of the Society.[19]

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[19] Phila. Northern District MM min., 31-10-1775. Phila. MM min., 29-12-1775, 26-1-1776.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNITY OF THE SOCIETY

In the estimation of eighteenth-century Friends--and in the present discussion of Quaker discipline--heresy, libel, torts, and breaches of contracts were juxtaposed because, although these acts differ superficially, they have a common tendency to alienate people from each other. In the Society of Friends, where the unity and harmony of the community was given the highest consideration, differences between members had to be eliminated, and the substance of the difference--theology, property, or promises--was ultimately subordinated to the welfare of the community. Justice was usually served by the elimination of the difference, but in a few cases even justice had to be tempered by a concern for its effect upon the unity of all the Quaker brethren.

Heresy and Schism

The Society of Friends in Pennsylvania rarely charged its members with heresy. Pennsylvania Friends shared with all Friends a simplicity or religious doctrine, an indifference to higher education, and an appreciation of social harmony which naturally discouraged differences of opinion in religious dogma. The Society of Friends had few articles of faith, no sacraments, and no ordained ministry. So few were the visible signs of the Quaker church that its conservative enemies claimed that the Society was no church.[1]

The foremost doctrine of Friends, the belief in the Inner Light,

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[1]William C. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism (London, 1921), p. xxxii.

did not require that Friends exercise critical intelligence, read the Scriptures, or hear the Word preached by an educated ministry in order to possess the "Light." A higher education was no prerequisite for the man or the church that desired the grace of God. While American Protestants in the eighteenth century were creating colleges to educate a ministry, Friends were educating their children to become tradesmen, artisans, and farmers. Friends expected education to increase a man's common utility, not to enhance his ability to speculate about religion. Their educational institutions--the family, the apprenticeship, and the grammar school--produced practical minds that were satisfied with simple and sometimes rude religious doctrines. Their simple doctrine and utilitarian education reinforced each other.[2]

The doctrine of the Inner Light also discouraged dissent. An article of the discipline states that

> . . . where any in the Church of God pretending conscience, or revelation shall arise to teach and practice (however insignificant or small in themselves) . . . principles or practice . . . contrary to such as are already received as true, and confirmed by God's Spirit in the hearts of his saints, and that the introducing of these things, tend to bring reproach upon the truth . . . those who have a true and right discerning, may . . . condemn and judge such things, and their so doing will be obligatory upon all members that have a true sense, because they will see it to be so and submit to it.[3]

No single Friend or minority of Friends could employ independent authorities--reason, revelation, or Scripture--to criticize the doctrine or discipline of the Society. The Spirit of God had worked through the majority of Friends to establish those principles. The existence of the rules sanctified them. To question the established order was to question the operation of the "Light." Any question, therefore, became an epistemological question, and to ask epistemo-

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[2] Frederick B. Tolles, Quakers and the Atlantic Culture (New York, 1960), p. 1. Barbour, Quakers in Puritan England, pp. 154, 155. William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York, 1942), pp. 313-316. Louis B. Wright, The Cultural Life of the American Colonies (New York, 1957), pp. 107-108, 120, 121.

[3] Woodbury MM MS Book of Discipline, Dept. of Records, p. 331.

logical questions was to risk apostasy. However, the indifference of Friends toward theology did not diminish their concern for the unity of their community. They ignored imprecise theological expressions, but they vigorously reacted against the person who threatened to disrupt their Society. This concern for unity also tended to diminish the number of prosecutions for heresy made by the Society, for the Society interpreted heretical dissent as indefensible contentiousness rather than erronious belief and so charged the dissident member in question.

The one major heretic among the Friends of colonial Pennsylvania produced the only important schism of that age. George Keith (1638-1716) led approximately one-quarter of the membership from the Society into the denomination that he founded, called the "Christian Quakers."[4] Keith was one of the most prominent Quakers of the seventeenth century. He had employed his critical intelligence and university training to defend his Quaker faith against its many enemies in Restoration England, and, in this work and others, shared the fellowship of George Fox, Robert Barclay, and William Penn. In the comparatively rude, unsophisticated community of Pennsylvania Friends, he became a pedant. He appointed himself pedagogue to American Friends to preserve them in orthodoxy. When he attempted to systematize Quaker beliefs and prepare a confession of the faith, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting rebuffed him and labeled his formulations "downright Popery."[5]

Keith's zealous, disputatious character ensured a clash with Pennsylvania Friends. At the Yearly Meeting of 1691, Thomas Stockdale accused Keith of heresy; Keith preached two Christs, said Stockdale, the inward and the outward. The audience was puzzled. Friends were familiar with Keith's teachings before Stockdale pointed them out, but they had disregarded Keith's reiterations as boring and innocuous. Now

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[4]The Great Awakening had no discernable effect upon the Society of Friends. There was neither schism, any increase in disownments for attending non-Quaker worship, increase in voluntary withdrawals, nor increase in inattendance in the period of the Great Awakening. See also Tolles, Quakers, p. 34.

[5]Ethyn Williams Kirby, George Keith (1638-1716) (New York, 1942), pp. 50, 51, 55.

Stockdale asked Friends to censure Keith. Keith demanded that the Society examine his teachings and positively affirm their orthodoxy, but also, that when Friends acquit him of heresy, they explicitly censure Stockdale. Keith became prosecutor as well as defendant.[6]

Philadelphia Friends were baffled. Keith's biographer writes that "Accustomed as they were to testifying about the presence of God, they were utterly unprepared to become analytical about the who and why of this presence; and they felt themselves unsuited to judge what was heresy."[7] Had Keith withdrawn his demand and his counter-accusation, the Yearly Meeting would have gladly forgotten the quarrel. Keith persisted until six meetings were held to hear the accusations and counter-accusations. No decision was reached, and the debate was renewed the following year.

The Friends whom Keith attempted to push into the unwelcome role of inquisitors slighted Keith's objective when they refused to decide the theological issue and treated the controversy as a personal difference. In the first pronouncement on the dispute, "Friends in the Ministry" stated that

> We being prevented in our Meetings of late, to proceed orderly in business, by reason of a turbulent and unsubdued spirit, which has much disquited us . . . ,

heard the adversaries in the dispute.

> Our judgement is, That William Stockdale is reprovable, and blameworthy, for uttering the said words, they being an Offense to many sound and tender Friends, and that we condemn the same. And as for George Keith's manner of proceeding against him, we cannot own the same to be pursuant of Gospel Order, the said George Keith having not alone dealt with him in private, before he further prosecuted his Complaint; neither can we hold him excusable for his indecent Expressions to William Stockdale, he being elder in Truth and in Years.[8]

These weighty Friends were not interested in the merits of the discussion, but only wished that one or both disputants would remove

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[6]Kirby, pp. 62-87. [7]Kirby, p. 62.

[8]Kirby, p. 68 (The source of the quotation is not cited.).

this burr from their religious body. Keith exacerbated this pique and further distracted Friends from the theological issue when he began to hold separate meetings for his own supporters. His supporters even began to call themselves "Christian Quakers," publicly distinguishing themselves from other Quakers. The nettlesome difference was becoming schism and Keith undeniably was the wedge.

Six months later the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting disowned Keith, even then denying him the role he pursued. Had Philadelphia Friends labeled him a heresiarch, he might have received the label as a compliment. Instead, Friends charged him with "ungodly exposing of them in print, and otherwise endeavouring by his misrepresentations of them to make them the derision of the heathen, and scorne of fools," and with "Reviling, Railing, Lying, Slandering & falsely accusing." Common slander was Keith's offense.[9]

Keith lived most of the rest of his life in England, but from 1702 to 1704 returned to the American colonies as a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, proselytizing Friends especially.[10] Keith's behavior and tactics closely resembled those which he had employed in 1692; he sought to publicly debate with Friends upon Quaker theology and, by persuading Friends of the errors of Fox, Barclay, and Burrough, and other Quaker apostles, lead his auditors into the Anglican faith. In Massachusetts and Rhode Island Keith engaged several disputants. The results of these debates vary depending upon whose account of them one reads, Keith's or Friends'.[11] But Keith's plans were entirely frustrated in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland--Philadelphia Yearly Meeting--because wherever he visited Friends refused to hear him; they refused, they said, because he had been disowned. To confront Friends

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[9]Kirby, p. 76, quoting Epistle of Phila. Yearly Meeting, September, 1692.

[10]Kirby, Chapters IX, X.

[11]Kirby, pp. 129, 130. George Keith, A Journal of the Travels and Ministry of the Reverend George Keith, in Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, XX (Dec., 1951), pp. 380-386, 392.

Keith had to venture into their meetings for worship and lecture the congregation on Quaker errors. Friends responded to these intrusions by interrupting Keith and threatening to fine him for breaking the Toleration Act or by departing, leaving Keith to speak to an empty meeting house.[12] On a visit to the congregation at Bank Meeting House in Philadelphia, Keith wrote that Friends tore from his hands the paper which he was reading, overturned the bench upon which he stood, and pushed his collegue, the Reverend Mr. John Talbot, out of the Meeting House.[13]

While denying Keith a hearing, Friends were zealous to confute him and repair any damage he created; several eminent Friends, including Thomas Story and John Richardson, followed Keith to counsel the individuals and meetings which Keith had visited. Friends' treatment of Keith and their anxiety over apostasy and schism had changed little since 1692.[14]

Compared with Keith and the Christian Quakers, the remaining heretics or dissenters were almost negligible in number. There may have been as many as 300 Keithians; there were only twenty-five other dissenters whose complaints can be identified as theological in nature. In the minutes of the Society these lesser dissenters were usually identified as disorderly and caviling persons who threatened the harmony of the Society. Had they not caviled at the ministry of other Friends they, like Keith, would have been indistinguishable from common slanderers.

The lesser dissenters frequently expressed their dissatisfaction with the ministry of some other Friend when the objectionable Friend was praying in a meeting. Quaker men customarily removed their hats when someone prayed; these dissenters kept their hats on. G. S. wore his hat while J. S. was praying and later reflected upon J. S.'s ministry "calling it dead and dry stuff." Other dissenters interrupted

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[12]Kirby, pp. 135, 138, 139, 140, 143. Keith, p. 404.

[13]Keith, p. 424.

[14]Kirby, p. 142.

prayers or meditations, alleging that they were grieved by the testimony. The Society treated these persons as delinquents and demanded that they apologize for their outbursts. The Society did not listen to their grievances.[15]

Occasionally, a whole congregation was the object of a Friend's remonstration. H. J. ran out of the meeting in a furious manner accusing everyone there of breaking the covenant. Months later he refused to attend meetings alleging "you are a corrupt people . . . in doctrine." When Concord Monthly Meeting disowned him, it described him as "having been puffed up," "headdy highminded unruly wilfull stuborn," "like a wave of the sea casting forth froth and dirt." Labor with him, it said, is "all like water spilt upon the ground trampling all under foot turning like the dog to the vomit again."[16] Another Friend in Concord Monthly Meeting posted the following notice on the door of the Chichester meetinghouse:

> Awake Awake to reighteousness all you inhabitants of Pennsylvania and all you who have erred from the grace of God which was given you to profit withall. --the Lord cutt you off, as he hath done in former ages in the wilderness. F. H.[17]

Although Concord Monthly Meeting found F. H.'s charges insupportable, the Meeting left no record of having censured him.

Exeter Monthly Meeting disowned a member who charged that Exeter Friends had "opened a door, and have gone, and are going in the way to lay waste and destroy the order and discipline of the Law and the Gospel." The member appealed his disownment to Quarterly Meeting and it decided that he did indeed have reason to criticize Exeter Friends; he was reinstated! But the Quarterly Meeting cautioned that he should not have acted so hastily and disorderly in speaking against the Meeting;

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[15]Chester MM min., 5-2-1703, 28-4-1703. Concord MM min., 8-6-1692. Chester MM min., 27-1-1699, 30-8-1732.

[16]Concord MM min., 26-4-1699, 11-6-1701, 9-1-1702.

[17]Concord MM min., 10-12-1689.

Friends had procedures for the discussion of differences.[18]

In only one case did Friends describe the delinquent in enough detail to permit reconstruction of the heresy. The heretic was the eminent botanist, John Bartram--a devout, modest man who still worshipped with Friends after they disowned him. His scientific study led him to disbelieve the miraculous aspects of Christianity and to accept Deistic notions. A statement he made after his disownment has become famous: "it is through that telescope I see God in his Glory."[19] Darby Monthly Meeting showed no impatience with Bartram and no offense with his beliefs. It asked Friends to visit him "And in the spirit of meekness labor with him that if possible he may be brought to believe in Christ as the Savious of the world." The Meeting prolonged his treatment because "there appearing to be a tender regard in this Meeting not only for his present but his future happiness." However, Darby Friends could not persuade Bartram and disowned him. They charged that

> he disbelieved in the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as being perfectly God as well as man. . . . Wherefore fully believing in the Miraculous Conception birth Miracles death Glorious Resurrection and Assention of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as recorded in holy writ; we can do no less for the clearing of truth than give forth this testimony against such dark notions and hereby declare the said John Bartram to be no member of our Christian Society. . . .[20]

The censure of heresy, which Keith zealously sought in order to confound, came effortlessly to Bartram.

The Friends of Keith's generation were more frequently disturbed by the professions of their brethren and threatened to dissociate themselves from their erring brethren. Excluding the Keithians, 40 per cent of all the Friends who separated from the Society in the colonial period did so in the two decades before 1702. When the Christian Quakers

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[18] Exeter MM min., 30-1-1749.

[19] Arthur Raistrick, Quakers in Science and Industry (London, 1950), p. 258.

[20] Darby MM min., 4-5-1757, 7-9-1757, 1-2-1758.

are included, 95 per cent of the separatists belong to the years before 1702. In the seventeenth century, when the danger from dissent and schism was greatest, the Society was less willing to discuss error or recognize any principles but its own. Keith was refused an audience by Friends as were the other ten dissenters before 1702. In each case the discussion of issues was preempted by a charge of disorderliness.

The biographer of Keith suggests that the Pennsylvania Friends were less tolerant of dissent than English Friends. In England, Friends had the education and leisure that permitted them to entertain theological questions. The rude Pennsylvanians were too preoccupied with erecting a commonwealth and a church to care for speculative thought. Their preoccupation caused them to ignore opinions as diverse as Stockdale's and Keith's. But when Keith attempted to distract them from their physical tasks, to change and perhaps divide them, their apathy changed to hostility.[21]

By 1738 conditions that had shortened the tempers of seventeenth-century Friends had disappeared. The manifestations of dissent had also become rare. When Bartram came to the attention of Friends, they did not cut off his dissent at its mere appearance, but listened to him and debated with him. Anxiety and urgency had disappeared from their treatment of error.

Slander and Libel

There is little indication that Friends distinguished heretical dissent from the more common differences between Friends. In twenty-five of the twenty-six cases of heresy one Friend objected to the preaching and prayer of another Friend. Only John Bartram was accused directly by the Society and was neither plaintiff nor defendant in an intramural difference. The Society cared about the mode of the action--a difference between Friends--rather than the substance of the alleged

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[21] Kirby, Keith, pp. 50, 51.

error.[22]

The Society refused to hear accusations of heresy. But since it had encouraged the members to assist the overseers in the observation and reporting of misconduct, it could not similarly dismiss all reports of secular misconduct. The assistance of the members had to be controlled however, for they could overlook or maliciously ignore the difference between dutifully reporting breaches of discipline and reporting rumors and opinions. Defamation of character not only injured the victim but threatened the harmony and unity of the Society. "Tale bearing, reproaching, back biting or speaking evil, of their brethren or neighbors; or busily medling; where not concerned, with the affairs of other folks," have a tendency, states the discipline, "to raise up strife and discord, or cause disesteem among the brethren and neighbours. . . ."[23] Because slander endangered the community, it was a criminal act. Although the victim of slander might apprehend the offender, the Society, not the victim, prosecuted him.

A few cases of slander were frivolous: a Friend made an "unguarded expression"; another Friend compared a man to "a London pickpocket"; two young Friends spread reports that a young woman was lewd.[24] Most slanders, however, threatened to disrupt families, neighborhoods, or the Society. Two Friends were "scandalizing" their sisters-in-law; one insinuated that her sister-in-law was an adultress. A third Friend spread the story that ten years earlier she had caught her husband in bed with another woman; Goshen Monthly Meeting accused her of trying to procure false witness to that alleged act. Two of these three slanderers were disowned. Six Friends in colonial Pennsylvania, all women, maliciously attacked their neighbors. One wrote a "ridiculous" letter to another woman's husband. These women were usually guilty of spreading rumors about their neighbors--that a neighbor woman was drunk, for example. Falls Monthly Meeting thought that by R. M.'s libel of R. Y.

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[22] Darby MM min., 4-5-1757.

[23] Gwynedd MM MS Book of Discipline, Dept. of Records, pp. 23-24.

[24] Gwynedd MM min., 26-4-1757. Chester MM min., 6-9-1686. Abington MM min., 29-11-1756. Darby MM min., 28-2-1771.

"the reputation of the Society may suffer as well as that of R. Y." Concord Monthly Meeting tried for a year and a half to reconcile two back-biting members. Although one of them was initially at fault, each had to condemn his abusive language and be reconciled. When their protracted libelous conduct endangered the reputation of the Society, Concord Meeting disowned both men.[25]

Lack of evidence convinced Friends that some accusations were malicious. J. T. accused a Friend of miscounting election ballots, but refused to produce any witnesses to the alleged act of fraud. E. P. accused a Friend of taking eight acres of land, but lacked any proof of that fraud. Their respective Monthly Meetings found the accusations so irresponsible that the Meetings prosecuted the accusers for slander. J. T. appealed his conviction to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting only to have it reaffirm the original conviction.[26]

Unless libelous statements were printed, Friends treated the authors of libels the same way that it treated slanderers. Since the written libels, like slander, were usually attacks on personal character and manners, the medium of expression was the only difference between the two offenses. A young man wrote "filthy expressions" along the roadside. Several men had written verses that defamed a Friend. A woman wrote and circulated a paper attacking her neighbors.[27]

Friends treated printed libels with far more caution than written libels and slander. Instead of punishing the offender, Friends tried to prevent the offense. The Society established a system of prior censorship to control the printing of papers, pamphlets, and books by its members. Any Friend who wished to publish a manuscript had to sub-

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[25] Radnor MM min., 14-12-1769. Goshen MM min., 5-8-1722, 15-2-1751. Concord MM min., 13-10-1763. Newgarden MM min., 25-8-1729. Concord MM min., 4-5-1774. Sadsbury MM min., 23-8-1769. Falls MM min., 4-10-1689, 4-11-1772. Concord MM min., 5-5-1763 through 3-10-1764.

[26] Middletown MM min., 5-5-1766, 3-7-1766, 6-12-1770. Chester MM min., 30-8-1699.

[27] Goshen MM min., 17-12-1728. Gwynedd MM min., 19-9-1769. Radnor MM min., 8-6-1769.

mit it to a committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting which was empowered to correct or forbid publication of "writings tending to raise contention, or occasion breach of unity among brethren." Publication without the permission of the committee was a disciplinary offense.[28]

The schism of George Keith proved to Friends the potency of printed libelous statements. At the time when the Keithian schism was only a personal dispute between Keith and William Stockdale and the Society was only an intermediary, Keith published a tract titled A Plea for the Innocent in order to place his argument before the general public. Publishing the dispute was a blunder, for the appeal to non-Quakers made adversaries of Friends who had been intermediaries and had patiently listened to Keith's complaints. The Society was doubly angry because Keith's publisher, William Bradford, was a Quaker, a partisan of Keith, and owned the only printing press in Pennsylvania. For almost two years thereafter, the Society had no means of publishing rejoinders to Keith's polemics.[29]

In 1738 Benjamin Lay published his attack on the Society and proved, as Keith had, that the vigilance of the Society and the threat of disownment could not prevent a martyr from publishing his convictions. Lay ignored not only the rules of the Society but also the spirit and the purpose of the rules; he searched for novel ways to embarrass the Society and the slaveholders within it.[30]

Friends libeled other individual Friends, rarely the Society as Keith and Lay had. Nor was theology or ethics the usual subject of the libel; profane conduct was far more controversial. The censors' duty was to prevent these profane, intramural quarrels.

In eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, some Friends who were active in partisan politics were found guilty of libeling their Quaker rivals.

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[28]Chester MM MS Book of Discipline, Dept. of Records, p. 9. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 23-7-1718.

[29]Kirby, Keith, p. 69.

[30]Thomas E. Drake, Quakers and Slavery in America (New Haven, 1950), pp. 43-47.

In 1725 James Logan, Commissioner of Property in the province and member of the provincial Council, published a pamphlet against David Lloyd, the speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Logan asked rhetorically if Lloyd's conduct was not contrary to the "lovely spirit of meekness and charity" of Friends. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting demanded that Logan condemn his attack on Lloyd. Although Logan replied that he was only defending his own character, he eventually condemned his back-biting.[31]

In 1755 a Friend published a pamphlet entitled "Tit for Tat"; it contained "abusive and scurrilous reflections on the proprietaries, the governor, and other persons in power. . . ." The Friend whom the Meeting accused of being the author disclaimed any knowledge of the pamphlet. The Meeting disowned him and published a notice in the Pennsylvania Gazette disclaiming any responsibility for the pamphlet.[32]

Differences Between Friends

Hundreds of differences between Friends did not involve malice, fraud, or any other bad motive. Differences arose from uncertain questions of law or from legitimate grievances that the Society did not perceive. In these situations where facts and blame were uncertain, the Society could not discipline an offender; the contest was a tort and neither party to it was a criminal. Yet the Society had a duty to perform in torts as well as in criminal actions. Any difference, legitimate or not, could alienate one Friend from another. The Society had to settle the difference without alienation and disharmony; it had a healing function as well as a judicial function. The secular courts could solve the legal question, but because the Society's standards of harmony and mutual concern exceeded the standards of secular society, Friends would not delegate the reconciling function to the secular authorities.

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[31]Frederick B. Tolles, James Logan and the Culture of Provincial Pennsylvania (Boston, 1957), pp. 138, 139. Phila. MM min., 29-2-1726.

[32]Phila. MM min., 26-12-1755, 1-1-1756.

The Society rejected the use of the public courts; no Friend could prosecute another in the courts of provincial Pennsylvania, nor could any two Friends have recourse to the provincial courts to settle their disagreement. The Society even asked "that Friends do avoid going to law with the others not of our profession," for "it is our duty to seek peace with all men and to avoid giving provocation or just offense with any."[33]

In place of a prosecution at law the Society prescribed a procedure which it called "Gospel Order," according to which the aggrieved Friend must first visit the offender privately and explain the grievance to him. If the offender refused to listen or refused to redress the grievance, the aggrieved Friend informed the overseers and visited the offender a second time in the company of the overseers. If the offender still refused to listen or treat with the visitors, or if he did confer, revealed his guilt, and refused redress, he became a delinquent. In situations where the existence of a grievance and the responsibility for its commission were uncertain, the questions were put to arbitrators chosen by both parties to the question, or in case they refused to choose, by the Meeting. To avoid producing contention and division in the Monthly Meeting the arbitrators conferred independently of it, then reported their decision to the litigants and the Meeting. Unless one of the litigants asked for a rehearing or appealed the decision to the Quarterly Meeting, the decision was final.

If the Friend at fault fulfilled the demands of the arbitrators, the difference was ended. But if the arbitrators, overseers, or Monthly Meeting detected malice, fraud, or anger in the conduct of either litigant, or if the grievance was a breach of discipline, the delinquent party had to confess and condemn his conduct. Litigation had to be conducted within the bounds of mutual concern and love. Gospel Order attempted to produce justice at no sacrifice of love and unity.

When the Society had exhausted its ecclesiastical sanctions against an incorrigible Friend by disowning him, the aggrieved Friend

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[33]Philadelphia Yearly Meeting min., 21-7-1719.

remained without justice. At that point the Society permitted the aggrieved to enter his complaint in the courts of the province so that force could be employed to obtain redress and justice.[34] In torts and contracts, the final provision of the discipline was not disownment but appeal to the law and the use of force. Friends would not themselves use force; but by appealing to the secular courts, they, with the Society's sanction, commissioned the act that they would not themselves perform. The litigation machinery of the Society, allegedly created to avoid the use of force and settle differences in a manner consonant with Quaker ethics, in fact abetted the secular courts. The insularity of the Society was deliberately broken and customary practice was ignored for the sake of expediency and justice.

Some Friends ignored the Gospel Order and prosecuted fellow Quakers in the law courts. They excused their error with allegations that the defendants were dishonest, ready to abscond, or already disowned. The man who had been clerk of Chester Quarterly Meeting for twenty-five years denied that Friends had the right to hear disputes; they were attempting to "usurp to themselves a prerogative and power to hear and determine a matter of meum and tuum." When the Meeting disowned him, he demanded wages for his twenty-five years of service and he received them. David Lloyd, the onetime speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, a lawyer and politician by profession, twice prosecuted Quakers at law. His second prosecution initiated a controversy that lasted almost a year.[35]

Usually the defendant in a civil prosecution reported the plaintiff to the Monthly Meeting and became the plaintiff in the Meeting's disciplinary action. The original defendant could have the satisfaction of an apology from his prosecutor plus compensation for any costs

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[34] Philadelphia Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1710. The Society also permitted legal prosecution of delinquent Friends who had not been disowned. See Falls MM min., 1722 and throughout.

[35] Gwynedd MM min., 24-6-1766. Abington MM min., 30-5-1768. Chester Quarterly Meeting min., 8-6-1720. Phila. MM min., 26-9-1708, 29-4-1709 through 31-1-1710.

he had incurred in his own defense.[36]

The guilty defendant in a public lawsuit could delay his prosecutor and assume the appearance of an aggrieved, pious Friend by reporting his prosecutor to the Monthly Meeting. Before Philadelphia Monthly Meeting R. L. excused his own indebtedness because his creditor had prosecuted him at law. The Meeting received his complaint and required the creditor to desist, condemn his action, and pay the court costs. Then the Meeting proceeded to the question of R. L.'s debt. After R. L. refused to appoint arbitrators, the Meeting's appointees found R. L. liable for the debts in question. When R. L. rejected their decision, the Meeting called his reasons "trifling and evasive," and threatened to disown him and his wife as "persons disregarding peace and good neighbourhood." The following month he told the Meeting that it had no jurisdiction over the question, that the proper place for litigation was in the courts of law! He was disowned.[37]

Friends rendered decisions in a wide variety of tort and contract cases. The most frequent complaints concerned debts, breaches of contracts, probate of wills, real estate boundaries, and, occasionally, slander and false accusation. David Lloyd was prosecuted by Francis Daniel Pastorius for defrauding some Germantown Friends of their lands. James Logan was prosecuted for breach of promise in marriage.[38]

Some bona fide complaints were litigated as torts because the Society would probably have found them too trivial to prosecute. O. B., for example, prosecuted his cousin for, as O. B. alleged, "stomping" on his sore foot. Although the Society intended that their litigation procedure should eliminate friction from the Society and reconcile Friends with each other, the instruments of Friends' discipline could be employed to the opposite purpose; Friends who might not have any legitimate reason to prosecute their brethren nevertheless exploited

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[36] Goshen MM min., 10-3-1769 through 11-1-1771.

[37] Phila. MM min., 29-6-1746 through 26-4-1747.

[38] Phila. MM min., 30-11-1712, 26-4-1713 through 27-9-1713. Tolles, Logan, p. 77.

the disciplinary machinery. The Society, unlike the courts, did not have to tolerate these litigious personalities. Abington Monthly Meeting reprimanded W. C. for "disreputably maintaining trivial controversies and demeaning himself over small and frivolous matters," conduct which Friends found unbecoming a man of his age. The Meeting ultimately disowned him for making false accusations.[39]

Where complaints arose naturally--between businessmen, for example--the discipline could expedite the settlement of differences and prevent acrimony. But where public disputes were unnatural--as within the family--the discipline could ironically catalyse the dissolution of family ties. J. H. refused to help maintain his mother, who was in such poverty that Radnor Monthly Meeting provided for her needs. J. H. excused himself with the allegation that his brothers and sisters owed him part of their father's estate. Radnor Meeting prosecuted that complaint for him. Still he refused to support his mother, offering the reason that his siblings kept a deed from him. The Meeting procured the deed for him. Thereafter, he refused to support his mother, alleging that she had no right to any support. He refused to arbitrate the question or confer with the arbitrators appointed by the Meeting. The Meeting disowned him.[40] When kinsman misappropriated the litigation machinery to prosecute kinsman, neither justice nor harmony was served by the institution created to preserve love among the most remote Friends.

Friends professed to the world to be a singularly loving, harmonious community. Schism, heresy, slander, and disagreements within the Society denied that profession to varying degrees, on occasion embarrassed Friends, and always caused them to labor to calm disaffection within their ranks. By reason of their profession, Friends were naturally a self-conscious minority, but, in the early eighteenth century, were especially sensitive to opinion because of the defection of the Keithians. For at least two decades after Keith's schism, Friends

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[39] Darby MM min., 7-12-1738. Abington MM min., 31-3-1755 through 24-8-1757.

[40] Radnor MM min., 8-10-1748 through 10-8-1753.

in Pennsylvania resolved to show their reformed, unbroken ranks to their detractors. In these years it is difficult to distinguish in the Society's reaction to intramural disagreements between concern for the unity of the community and anxiety over exposing the discord to the world, and possible to suspect that Friends neglected legitimate criticism from their brethren in the belief that unanimity best served their community.

CHAPTER VII

SLAVERY

The only radical innovation in the discipline of the Society of Friends during the colonial period was initiated in 1758 when Friends undertook to eliminate slaveholding by members of the Society. At least until 1758, Friends' attitudes on slavery and their treatment of slaveholders were characterized by anxiety, equivocation, and evasion. Before 1760 tension existed within the Society between a few antislavery advocates, who championed the reform without regard for expediency and decorum, and the majority of Friends who were either apathetic or very cautious.[1]

Although antislavery advocates were always an unsuccessful minority of Friends before 1758, their number and prospect for success widely varied between 1682 and 1758. From 1682 until 1720 there was repeated agitation against slavery which offered the reformers some hope of success. But from 1720 until the 1740's, only the rare radical like Benjamin Lay pierced the apathy of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. By 1758 sentiment had changed so quickly to favor antislavery that the Yearly Meeting could officially pronounce its opposition, not only to the previously forbidden slave trade and mistreatment, but also to the very ownership of slaves.

Between 1692 and approximately 1730 two characteristics of Pennsylvania Friends, anxiety over schism and increasing affluence, inhibited the spread of antislavery sentiment.[2]

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[1] See Thomas E. Drake, Quakers and Slavery in America (New Haven, 1950) for the best account of colonial Quakers and ecclesiastical policy on slavery.

[2] Drake, pp. 11-13, 50-51.

The Friends of Germantown, Pennsylvania, including the prominent Francis Daniel Pastorius, in 1688 presented Philadelphia Yearly Meeting with the first antislavery protest, perhaps the earliest made by any American colonists. The Yearly Meeting treated the Germantown protest with candor that largely disappeared from its treatment of antislavery protests in the subsequent forty years; it told the Germantown Friends that it could not condemn slaveholding because too many Friends owned slaves, especially those Friends outside of Pennsylvania.[3]

Four years after the Germantown protest, antislavery became associated with religious heresy and schism, because the heresiarch George Keith attacked the slaveholding practices of Friends and prohibited slaveholding among his Christian Quakers. Keith and the Christian Quakers were unequivocal in their protest against slavery and slaveholding orthodox Friends. The quarrel was not intramural as the Germantown protest had been; to the Keithians and their printer, William Bradford, belongs the credit for publishing the first antislavery tract in America, An Exhortation & Caution to Friends Concerning Buying and Keeping of Negroes. Germantown Friends had argued for prudence and economy; the Keithians declared that slavery violated the law of God. The Germantown Friends petitioned; the Keithians called their brethren to assist runaway slaves to escape. Keithians claimed to be more Christian than those who had disowned them for being delinquents.[4] The Keithian attack added an emotional dimension to a slavery debate that might have been more easily resolved had it been confined to economic and prudential considerations. However, after the 1690's positions ossified, preventing compromise between critics and defenders of slavery.

The anxiety over schism and the zeal for order evident in the Society's summary treatment of religious dissent appeared in the treatment of antislavery protests after 1695.

In 1711 the Friends from rural Chester County (Chester Quarterly Meeting) made the first of four orderly protests that established their

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[3]Drake, pp. 11-13. [4]Drake, pp. 14-16.

preeminence as the antislavery reformers in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. To their 1711 protest they received a curt rejection resembling that given the Germantown Friends. But Chester Friends, unlike the protestors of 1688, in 1715 revived their demand that the purchase of slaves be prohibited. The prominent and conservative Quaker merchant, Issac Norris, said that

> Our meeting was large and comfortable, and our business would have been very well were it not for the warm pushing of some Friends, of Chester chiefly, in the business of negroes. The aim was to obtain a minute that none should buy them for the future. This was opposed as of dangerous consequence to the peace of the church. . . .

Norris and fellow committeemen appointed by the Yearly Meeting to answer the Chester petition essentially denied the request by asking slaveholding Friends to treat their Negroes well and all Friends henceforth to forbear "judging or reflecting on one another in public or private concerning the detaining or keeping them servants."[5]

Chester Friends nevertheless renewed their protest in 1716, asking the Yearly Meeting to reconsider its position. The Meeting replied that nothing had changed since 1715, "Yet in condescention to such Friends as are streighted in their minds against the holding [of slaves] . . . it is desired that Friends generally do as much as may be to avoid buying such Negroes as shall hereafter be brought in, rather than offend any Friends who are against it; yet this is only caution and not censure."[6] The minute produced no action by the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings and made little practical difference.

Chester Quarterly Meeting observed the proper channels for orderly protest, despite the 1715 insinuation of the Yearly Meeting respecting public reflections of fellow Friends. The following year protest became disorderly when a solitary Friend, William Southby, reproved the Yearly Meeting. Southby chafed at Philadelphia Friends'

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[5]Drake, pp. 24, 26, 27. J. F. Watson, Annals of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1830), II, 263. Chester MM min., 25-5-1715.

[6]Drake, p. 27.

tarrying until unanimity and harmony would characterize the antislavery movement, for to his radical mind the moral issue was more important than the organization. "And though you strive to discourage me for being so plain with you," he announced to Yearly Meeting, "but seeing it is really and truly for the promotion of truth and righteousness in the earth . . . I am not much concerned for the frowns or displeasure of any that may oppose it."[7] When the Meeting rebuffed Southby, he printed a paper denouncing slaveholding Quakers. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting demanded that he "endeavour effectually to stop the spreading of his printed papers and condemn the manner of his . . . censuring Friends contrary to the minutes of our Yearly Meeting." Southby condemned, but his condemnation was unsatisfactory. The Monthly Meeting said his action had "a tendency to division" and threatened to disown him. There the record of Southby ends.[8]

Another Friend, John Farmer, was more abrasive than Southby and thus a greater threat to the harmony of the Society. In 1717 he had read an epistle against slavery to the New England Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders and had as a result of his intransigence been disowned by the Meeting. He returned to Philadelphia, reading his proscribed criticisms to Friends and appealing for support. His "disorderly practice," concluded the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, had "a tendency to division." Unwelcome at Philadelphia meetings and ordered to "forbear to offer his gifts publicly either in the ministry or prayer," Farmer defiantly began holding his own meetings. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting responded:

> This meeting being informed that one John Farmer holds meetings in several places, and that some under the profession of truth do inadvisedly go to such separate meetings, it is therefore established that the said John Farmer stands disowned by Friends. . . . And all friends are advised to avoid going to such separate meetings or countenancing him, or any such disorderly practices. . . .[9]

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[7] Drake, p. 28.

[8] Phila. MM min., 27-12-1716, 30-1-1717.

[9] Phila. MM min., 27-10-1717, 28-8-1720. Drake, pp. 29-32.

Southby and Farmer are reminiscent of the schismatics and "caviling spirits" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The antislavery protests of the former, like the heresies of the latter, were never mentioned; their offense was to refuse acquiescence to the decision of the majority of Friends and to deny the righteousness and efficacy of the "sense of the meeting." Because the judgments of Friends and the articles of discipline had the sanction of divine counsel--the leading of the "Light"--the disobedient, in this case the reformer, was wrong. In addition to the epistemological inhibition to change, the eighteenth-century antislavery reformers had to contend with the hypersensitivity of Pennsylvania Friends toward schism and to bear the stigma that the Keithians had attached to antislavery advocacy.

For ten years following the disownment of Farmer, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting records are silent on the subject of slavery. And in the meantime, Quaker slaveholdings increased with Quaker wealth. "The Quakers who disowned William Southby and John Farmer," writes Thomas Drake, "had more to do with slave trading and slaveholding than any other generation of Friends before or since."[10] If the passage of time in any degree removed the anxiety of schism from the minds of Friends, the vested interest of many Friends in their growing slaveholdings replaced anxiety as a barrier to antislavery reform.[11] In these decades, slavery became commonplace to many Friends who became callous to its unchristian character and who, unlike seventeenth-century Friends, could rarely be pricked by conscience.

In 1730, upon the prodding of the Chester County Friends, the slavery issue was reopened in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The result was much the same as that of 1715; the Monthly Meetings were to advise members against buying slaves, but, the Yearly Meeting specifically added, this advice was not a matter deserving censure or discipline of violators. The response that this advice produced in lower meetings

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[10] Drake, p. 34.

[11] Darby Monthly Meeting's treatment of John Bartram in 1738 revealed some decrease in anxiety over schism.

was negligible.[12]

Benjamin Lay immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1731 and, after several years, became notorious in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for his antislavery protests and for his unwillingness to accept discipline (e.g., lying in the doorway of a meeting house from which he had been ejected, forcing Friends to walk over him). Lay's 1738 protest and, especially, his public attack on Quaker slaveholders in his book All Slave-Keepers, That keep the Innocent in Bondage, Apostates, ensured his disownment. "I know no worse or greater stumbling blocks the devil has to lay in the way of honest inquirers than our ministers and elders keeping slaves," wrote Lay, "and by straining and perverting Holy Scriptures, preach more to hell than ever they will bring to heaven by their feigned humility and hypocrisy." Lay, not content to disparage weighty, slaveholding Friends whom he alleged controlled the discipline and government of the Society, urged "such old rusty candlesticks to be moved out of their places. . . ."[13] Even George Keith, before his disownment, had never advocated revolt within the Society.

No Friend after Lay so conspicuously defied Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and until the 1750's no Friends or Meetings showed interest in antislavery advocacy. Friends, by the observation of some contemporaries, were indistinguishable from other Pennsylvanians in keeping of slaves.[14] All conscience was not dormant, however, for the humble John Woolman labored inconspicuously in the 1740's to prick the consciences of individual slaveholders; Woolman avoided involvement in the politics of Yearly Meeting.[15]

Sometime in the early 1750's antislavery sentiment among Friends

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[12] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1730.

[13] Drake, pp. 43-46. Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 16-7-1738.

[14] Drake, pp. 50-51.

[15] Amelia M. Gummere, ed., The Journal and Essays of John Woolman (New York, 1922), pp. 161, 167, 173.

grew strong enough to receive a sympathetic audience in the councils of the Society. After 1755 the authority of the Society clearly favored reform; instead of such pious and, as Benjamin Lay alleged, hypocritical pronouncements as those of 1715 and 1730, the Yearly Meeting issued advice that was implemented, and later, demands enforced with disabilities. Antislavery sentiment grew in the twenty years between 1755 and 1775; the early reforms of 1755-1765 were halting and feeble compared with those of the 1770's. In the first decade after 1755 the inertia of slaveholding custom and the novelty of reform prevented aggressive prosecution of slaveholders; the discipline outdistanced the enthusiasm of many, perhaps a majority of Friends. After 1765 the enthusiasm exceeded the demands of the discipline.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting signaled the shift in sentiment on slavery when it advised that members who purchased slaves should be admonished by the Monthly Meetings.[16] Instead of ignoring the advice, Monthly Meetings informed purchasers of slaves of the Society's disapproval and, in some Meetings, brought the purchasers before the session of the Meetings for scrutiny. Goshen Monthly Meeting excused two purchasers after they explained the circumstances of the purchases and promised to forego future purchases. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, formerly a center of pro-slavery sentiment vigorously admonished purchasers and by 1757 had become dissatisfied with such procedure and with the amorphous directive of 1755.[17] In 1757 the Meeting called four purchasers of slaves before it and instead of dismissing them with an admonition, it suspended consideration of the four until it questioned Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting as to how far Friends could testify against their error. The question reached Yearly Meeting where

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[16] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 20-9-1755. Drake, p. 59.

[17] Goshen MM min., 18-7-1757, 15-8-1757, 17-10-1757, 21-11-1757. Phila. MM min., 30-9-1757, 28-10-1757, 24-2-1758. Slaveholding was definitely an urban practice in the Society of Friends; fifty-five of the 116 offenses against the discipline on slaveholding occurred in Philadelphia. By contrast, Exeter Monthly Meeting, a rural meeting, recorded no offenses and in 1775 reported that only one Negro was owned by the Friends of that Meeting.

Woolman asked for additional reform. A few Friends attempted to secure the repeal of the advice of 1755; a larger number wanted no additional reform.

> And though none did openly Justifie the practice of Slave Keeping in general, yet some appear'd concern'd, lest the meeting Should go into Such measures as might give uneasiness to Many Brethren, alledging that if Friends patiently continued under the exercise, the Lord in time to Come, might open a way for the Deliverance of these people. . . .[18]

The Meeting decided upon further reform, partially in response to an eloquent plea by Woolman. Sanctions would be thereafter placed upon members who purchased or sold slaves: the offenders, although not disowned, could not participate in the business of the Society, nor would the Society accept contributions from them.[19] For the offender with little interest in the Society's policy, the disabilities were few. Rather than punishing the slave-purchasers the sanctions eliminated their influence from the councils of the Society and facilitated further reform.[20] More important than the sanctions in the 1758 discipline was the novelty of implementation--slaveholders were visited, reminded of Friends' policy, and urged to manumit their slaves.

The commendations Friends deserved for the 1758 policy and the novelty of implementation must be tempered with acknowledgment that the performance of Monthly Meetings and the response of slave-purchasing members varied widely, including disbelief, pervarication, and evasion, as well as respect, toward the most radical demand of the Society in the colonial period. The 1758 discipline initiated evolution, not revolution in the Society.

By the response to Gwynedd Monthly Meeting, the 1758 directive

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[18] Gummere, John Woolman, p. 216.

[19] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 28-9-1758.

[20] Drake argues that the 1758 sanctions removed proslavery Friends from the councils of the Society, thereby permitting further reform; yet between 1758 and the first reform thereafter, in 1774, only thirty-nine Friends were placed under the 1758 disabilities.

might not have existed, for in twelve years it applied no sanctions and was satisfied with little more than expressions of regret from offenders. In 1759 an offender told the Meeting that his conscience would have been better satisfied if he had not bought the slave. In 1760 an offender promised to use his slave well; the Meeting asked him to obey the Golden Rule. In 1770 an offender desired "Friends to pass it [his offense] by and saying that he never intends to do the like again."[21]

Middletown Monthly Meeting apprehended seven offenders in June 1763, six of whom initially ignored the Meeting but eventually expressed regret; the seventh defended his purchase of a slave. None of them, including the candid defender of slavery, suffered any disability. As late as 1771 an offender in Radnor Monthly Meeting was dismissed after being told to consider Friends' testimony on slave purchasing.[22]

In extenuation of their particular purchase or sale of Negroes, offenders often alleged extraordinary circumstances, and Friends usually found them creditable. The sale of a Negro, prohibited in order to ensure the good treatment of the Negro and, perhaps, to promote his manumission, was the usual offense. The offenders were apprehended after the offense, leaving the Society with little but the regrets of the seller. Regret usually sufficed. The situation was not beyond rectification, as the offenders insinuated, for the Society could have demanded that the Negro be repurchased. However, the Society never demanded repurchase before 1775. J. W. sent his Negro away to be sold because he was unruly and disobedient. Although J. J. sent his Negro to North Carolina and sold her because she was disobedient and incorrigible, J. J. said he sympathized with Friends' policy on slavery. I. R.'s Negro was a thief and had to be sold outside the city of Philadelphia to remove him from temptations and, said I. R., "prevent his being brought to an untimely end." I. R. also was sure slavery was wrong. M. R. sold two Negroes after being warned against it by Phila-

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[21] Gwynedd MM min., 27-11-1759, 26-2-1760, 31-3-1761, 29-10-1765, 27-2-1770, 30-10-1770.

[22] Middletown MM min., 2-6-1763. Radnor MM min., 8-2-1771.

delphia Monthly Meeting. She explained that the slaves were "wicked," unsuitable for freedom, and too unmanageable for her to keep. She tried to sell them with proviso for their freedom in ten years, but failed in that attempt and sold them anyway. The Meeting was suspicious and delayed nine months before accepting her explanation. T. Y. tried to extenuate his acquisition of a slave by pleading that had he not received the Negro from his debtor, he would have lost the debt. Falls Monthly Meeting placed him under sanctions.[23]

Three Friends were proved to be hypocrites. H. L. was excused for buying two Negroes in 1763 because he convinced Philadelphia Friends that his motive was the improvement of the slaves' conditions; six years later he sold the Negroes into a condition of destitution. After six months of treatment by Abington Monthly Meeting for purchasing a Negro, J. J. sold the Negro and expressed regret that he could no longer help the Negro; he regretted purchasing a Negro, he said, and would forbear doing so in the future, but two years later he bought another. Falls Monthly Meeting suspected J. W. was lying when he claimed he only had hired a Negro and would not purchase one; a year and a half later he bought one.[24]

Other offenders were more candid. Some, like the violators of the prohibition on oaths, expressed incredulity about the blameworthiness of the purchase and sale of slaves. Five of the seven offenders apprehended by Abington Monthly Meeting found nothing wrong or sinful in buying or selling slaves; one of them replied that "he cannot see the evil thereof." An offender from Wrightstown Monthly Meeting "signifieth that he thought he had done nothing amiss in that respect, and he also said he declined to make any satisfaction to friends."[25]

Leniency was not the rule throughout Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; thirty-six of the 107 Friends who bought or sold slaves between 1758

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[23]Phila. MM min., 30-3-1759, 25-5-1759, 27-5-1768, 29-2-1760, 29-7-1763. Falls MM min., 4-2-1767.

[24]Phila. MM min., 1-3-1764, 30-3-1770. Abington MM min., 28-4-1760, 20-9-1762. Falls MM min., 6-4-1763, 7-11-1764, 6-3-1765.

[25]Abington MM min., 21-9-1760. Wrightstown MM min., 5-3-1776.

and 1775 were placed under the 1758 sanctions.

The treatment of offenders became increasingly strict in the 1760's and markedly so in the 1770's, when Friends often demanded practical rectification of the errors of purchasing or selling slaves.[26] When J. C. in 1763 brought his marriage proposal to Goshen Monthly Meeting, which had already placed sanctions on him for purchasing a Negro, the Meeting refused his application. In the Meeting's opinion, the error he had defended a year earlier denied him the privileges that were denied to any otherwise delinquent Friends. Although the 1758 directive did not make a slave-owner a full delinquent nor disabled him from marriage, a zealous Meeting, like Goshen, found in the indeterminate status of a slaveholder the possibility of applying additional restrictions.[27]

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting showed little leniency toward offenders, disabling twenty of the fifty-two apprehended between 1757 and 1773. As early as 1764, Philadelphia Friends demanded a slave-purchaser free the Negro he had just bought. The Meeting was dissatisfied first, with the offender's simple promise of manumission, and later, with his written agreement which omitted the name of the boy and a condemnation of the institution of slavery. After a year of treatment and amended papers, the Meeting pardoned him.[28] The demand of manumission became common after 1770. Chester Monthly Meeting was asked by an offender what it required of him. It answered: a suitable education of the Negro and a written instrument, manumitting him at a suitable age, binding the offender, his heirs and executors. Two years later, Chester Friends required that another purchaser, who had manumitted his Negro, also compensate the Negro for his time of servitude. Instead of regarding a Negro sold by a Friend as beyond help, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting required in 1775 that a woman Friend

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[26] Althqugh the number of Friends apprehended decreased after 1765, the proportion of those who were disabled increased. The following are the ratios of those disabled to total offenders: 1758-1760, 3/27; 1761-1765, 23/49; 1766-1770, 8/12; 1771-1774, 8/12.

[27] Goshen MM min., 11-2-1763.

[28] Phila. MM min., 31-8-1764, 30-11-1764, 31-5-1765, 26-9-1765.

repurchase the Negro she had sold, then manumit him.[29]

Without an alteration in the discipline by the Yearly Meeting, abolition became the apparent objective of many Friends and meetings. After 1768 the Monthly Meetings scrutinized the slaveholding members. Committees repeatedly visited slaveholders to investigate their care and education of their slaves (which was mandatory) and, incidentally and increasingly, to propose that they manumit their slaves. The committee at Abington Monthly Meeting scrupulously attended to the duty and by 1772 reported that most slaveholders were willing to free their Negroes and that some had volunteered definite proposals for manumission. The committee in Concord Monthly Meeting reported it found a general disposition not to keep Negroes for a term of life. Chester reported some manumissions.[30]

Discontent with the leniency and indeterminateness of the 1758 directive arose. Falls Monthly Meeting in 1773 wished to know how to treat a member previously guilty of slave-purchasing when he committed a subsequent, different offense. In 1774, a Friend from Wilmington, Delaware, came to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting with a certificate attesting his membership insofar as a man who sold slaves could be a member. When the Meeting considered the man, it felt impelled to reopen the question of slaveholding in the Society, and to petition Quarterly and Yearly Meetings to "revise the minute above mentioned [of 1758] in order for the further promotion of our Christian testimony against a practice so evidently contrary to our Christian profession, and principles and common rights of mankind."[31] In response, the Yearly Meeting revised the discipline so that thereafter, Friends who bought, sold, or transferred slaves were to be completely disowned. Also any Friends possessing Negroes suitable for liberty who refused to liberate them had to appear before Yearly Meeting for scrutiny, and all owners

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[29] Chester MM min., 27-12-1773, 26-2-1776. Phila. MM min., 22-9-1775, 26-1-1776.

[30] Abington MM min., 27-6-1768, 26-6-1769, 27-7-1772. Concord MM min., 6-7-1768. Chester MM min., 25-11-1765.

[31] Falls MM min., 4-8-1773. Phila. MM min., 25-2-1774, 29-4-1774.

of Negroes had to educate them for eventual liberty and free them.[32] With these new instructions, the committees worked with greater vigor. Even Gwynedd Monthly Meeting, lenient and spiritless before 1770, reported in 1775 that only eight members owned seventeen slaves, and that five of these owners had proposed to manumit ten slaves.[33]

Abolition was the object of most meetings by 1772, the stated objective of the Society in 1774, and mandatory in 1776, when the Yearly Meeting required either manumission of slaves or disownment of members.[34] In contrast to the directive of 1758, the disciplines of 1774 and 1776 signalled the victory, not the initiation of the struggle.

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[32] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 1-10-1774.

[33] Gwynedd MM min., 25-7-1775.

[34] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 27-9-1776.

CHAPTER VIII

ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC DUTIES

The involvement of Pennsylvania Friends in the government, politics, and commerce of Pennsylvania has been the topic of many histories. The Quaker faith of William Penn, his political philosophy, and his description of the Pennsylvania enterprise as the "Holy Experiment," naturally prompted historians to explore the influence of Quakers upon politics. More recently, and primarily through the work of Frederick Tolles, the activity of Quakers in commerce and the influence of commerce upon Quakers have attracted the attention of historians. Individual Quaker politicians and merchants--William Penn, David Lloyd, James Logan, Israel Pemberton, Jr., --are subjects of biographies; political parties and factions--the Lloyd faction, the proprietary party, the Quaker party--figure in political histories and biographies.

Historians, however, have not focused their attention upon the Society of Friends per se--its economic and political policies and its regulation of the political and economic activities of all its members. The Society, while permitting members to engage in government, politics, and commerce, circumscribed the conduct of Quaker merchants and politicians by prohibiting the taking of oaths, the use of force, and other acts forbidden to all Friends, and by encouraging honesty, punctuality, and moderation. These prohibitions occasionally influenced the history of the province and, in political as well as ecclesiastical histories, deserve additional attention.[1]

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[1] In view of the recent inaccurate accounts of the relation of the Society of Friends to Pennsylvania politics, especially in the 1750's, there is a special need that attention be redirected to the

The foremost economic concern of the Society of Friends was the failure of its members to pay their creditors, rather than the protection of the consumer, prosecution of fraud, or any other economic activity. The number of reprehensible economic actions, excluding delinquent indebtedness, apprehended by the Society in Pennsylvania, does not equal the number of disciplinary cases for delinquent debts in Abington Monthly Meeting alone.[2]

The Society initiated most of the disciplinary actions for delinquent indebtedness without ever mentioning the creditors in the course of them. In a minority of the cases, the Quaker creditor brought his complaint against a debtor Friend to the attention of the meeting, proved the authenticity of the debt and the delinquency of the debtor, and relinquished to the meeting the prosecution of the debtor. Although the Society assisted the Quaker creditor when it disciplined a debtor, the Society was not a debt-collection agency for Quaker creditors. In all cases of delinquent indebtedness, but especially in those initiated by the Society itself, the Society displayed an interest in the error distinct from the financial justice due the creditor. In the case of one J. P. the Society alluded to its interest, for J. P., by his delay in repaying his just debts, "hath injured his reputation and through his misconduct cast a reflection on the Society."[3] And since the reputation of the Society was endangered by Friends who delayed payment to non-Friends, the Society received complaints from any creditor and disciplined Friends indebted to non-Friends. Finally, when the obligation was to a Friend, the Society had the additional responsibility to see it fulfilled without anger, slander, distraint of the debtor's property, or any

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subject. The relationship has been misconstrued by Daniel Boorstin, whose facts are incorrect, and by such commendable historians as William S. Hanna, whose narrative is impeccable, but who dismisses the problem of relationship. Daniel Boorstin, The Americans, The Colonial Experience (New York, 1958), pp. 58-63. William S. Hanna, Benjamin Franklin and Pennsylvania Politics (Stanford, Calif., 1964), p. 228.

[2]Abington MM had forty-nine cases of debt.

[3]Falls MM min., 6-3-1771.

recourse to civil authority. Delinquent debts potentially endangered the sectarian harmony so highly cultivated by Friends.[4]

Treatment of debtors varied from one Monthly Meeting to another--a rare inconsistency within the Yearly Meeting. Falls Monthly Meeting did not disown debtors, but terminated its treatment of them upon granting the creditor permission to prosecute the debtor at law. Such permission was granted by all Monthly Meetings in torts and breaches of contract when the Meetings could not induce the offender to redress the grievance. But most Meetings, unlike Falls, thereafter disowned the incorrigibles; Falls never did.[5]

The anomaly of Falls' practice is more than superficial, for by systematically permitting recourse to civil courts and the creditor's use of force in cooperation with the state, Falls Meeting was controverting the purpose of the discipline. The discipline should have eliminated differences and redressed grievances between Friends without alienating Friends, as the civil courts might. Most Monthly Meetings, therefore, permitted Friends to prosecute their brethren only after the Meetings had exhausted their means to provide justice and reconcile disputants and, consequently, had disowned the incorrigible party. When the legal prosecution occurred, the Quaker plaintiffs were prosecuting ex-Quaker defendants. Falls Monthly Meeting, however, permitted its members to prosecute their delinquent brethren at law before the Meeting had exhausted its disciplinary procedures and disowned the delinquents. The Meeting not only omitted its duty to reconcile members but also sanctioned the use of force by one Friend against another--force which the discipline dissuaded Friends from using against any man.

Also, Friends inconsistently asked debtors to condemn their offenses.[6] The brevity of the minutes makes it impossible to discern why some debtors were asked to condemn indebtedness whereas others

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[4]Bradford MM min., 12-9-1766.

[5]Falls MM min., throughout.

[6]Falls MM min., 30-6-1751, 29-1-1768.

were dismissed after paying the debt. The nature of their error may contain the answer; indebtedness was not reprehensible per se, but became reprehensible as the debtor delayed repayment. If the prosecutor could prove that the debtor's motive in delaying was to defraud, or, for example, if he observed the debtor preparing to abscond, the debtor was undoubtedly a delinquent and not just a tardy Friend. The variation in the demands made of debtors may correspond to the Meeting's opinions regarding the motives of the debtor revealed in the amount of time he delayed and other factors.

The delinquent indebtedness of Friends was often linked with other offenses, most frequently drunkenness. However, the evil of the error did not derive from the means through which it was incurred. Lack of business acumen, misjudgment, and bad luck, which were not in themselves reprehensible, caused the delays in payment which alone were sufficient reason for disownment.[7]

The Society strictly demanded that debts be repaid, requiring that a debtor offer up his possessions and even his person. Only after he had done so would the Society offer him its material assistance in his destitution. Sadsbury Monthly Meeting asked a woman Friend to give up her chattels, place her children into the homes of other Friends, and condemn her indebtedness.[8]

The Society would not permit Friends to seize the chattels of a debtor on their own initiative, or with the assistance of an officer of the law. A Friend from Goshen Meeting who went to the home of a debtor and took the equivalent of the debt in kind had to return the property and prove to the Monthly Meeting that he had not committed robbery.[9]

To escape forfeiture of property at the demand of either the

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[7]Phila. MM min., 29-3-1771. Gwynedd MM min., 29-3-1739. Uwchlan MM min., 7-8-1766. Phila. MM min., 30-10-1767. Falls MM min., 2-2-1718.

[8]Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1710. Sadsbury MM min., 21-2-1770, 21-3-1770.

[9]Goshen MM min., 17-12-1728.

Monthly Meeting or the sheriff, dozens of Friends absconded and were disowned.[10] A few Friends remained at their residences and refused to surrender their chattels; two secured debts to creditors they favored, refusing others. Friends of two debtors had given bond for the debts but lost the bond when their friends absconded. One of these debtors, whose uncle had given £120 bond for him, told the Monthly Meeting that "he had more on his books than the said[uncle]William was worth in the world," and that "he should take his own time for that [clearing himself] warning the Meeting to take care what the [they] did, for he would overhaul it all." A debtor from Concord Monthly Meeting warned that he would shoot anyone who assisted his creditor in recovering the debt, no matter how lawful their mission was.[11]

With its authority, the Society secured the contracts made by Friends and disciplined those members who breached their contractual obligations to either Friends or non-Friends. Most complaints of breaches of contract were arbitrated outside the sessions of the Monthly Meeting in order to avoid enlarging the controversy by laying it open to every auditor in the Monthly Meeting. Few records, therefore, describe the subject of the breaches or nature of the delinquents. Because the arbitration procedures of the Society and, if necessary, the disciplinary powers, were available to non-Quaker plaintiffs, the intent of the Society was not exclusively the protection of Quaker plaintiffs.

A few complaints were initiated by the Society, one of which involved Philadelphia Monthly Meeting as plaintiff. Three Friends had contracted with the Meeting to grant it the use of an alley near a meeting house, but delayed in complying "under frivolous pretenses and trifling evasive excuses," for which they were all disowned. In other cases, in which the breach required no arbitration, J. W. "purposefully destroyed a note"; J. R. tore up a contract; W. T. denied

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[10] See Abington MM min., 30-2-1750, 25-6-1755 for examples.

[11] Phila. MM min., 28-5-1749, 27-7-1753, 4-6-1772. Goshen MM min., 6-6-1766. Middletown MM min., 6-6-1765. Goshen MM min., 7-10-1768. Concord MM min., 5-2-1766.

"hand and seal to a certain bill by him given" after witnesses saw him sign and deliver the bill.[12]

Twenty-nine Friends in colonial Pennsylvania were prosecuted by the Society for assorted kinds of fraud, the most common offense being counterfeiting. D. J. had been convicted in civil courts of counterfeiting pieces-of-eight; he and his wife, who was passing her husband's handiwork, were disowned. R. H. was accused of being an accomplice of D. J., but proved that D. J. only had employed him to haul pig metal to Philadelphia and sell it for him. Four other Friends also counterfeited money or tampered with it.[13]

Two Friends were disowned for usury. I. W. took "more interest from some money lent than the laws of this province will allow." R. F. refused to return the interest he had fraudulently taken and then insured his disownment by shortly thereafter seizing a man's wheat in lieu of a rent payment. Three Friends deceived their patrons: one adulterated Indian corn meal with "Ship stuff"; another "did deface the head of a grey fox so that . . . [he] received pay for a red one"; the third confessed, "I was prevailed upon by the Enemy of my Soul: to Defraud Peter Dicks of three Quarters of a pound of Butter."[14]

In the most peculiar of the twenty-nine cases, six Friends were accused of practices which did not break laws or contracts, but which, in the opinion of Friends, took unfair advantage of the purchaser or the contractor. N. B. purchased bonds from a man who was not a Friend at a price below their current value, a transaction which N. B. refused to discuss with Goshen Monthly Meeting or to submit to arbitrators; he told the Meeting he would do the same thing whenever the

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[12] Phila. MM min., 30-1-1744. Chester MM min., 27-5-1765. Goshen MM min., 5-6-1727, 16-3-1737.

[13] Goshen MM min., 17-8-1748, 19-10-1748. Phila. MM min., 6-9-1683, 22-12-1750. Abington MM min., 29-5-1758. Chester MM min., 8-7-1689.

[14] Falls MM min., 1-2-1764. Goshen MM min., 11-3-1768. Abington MM min., 27-6-1774. Exeter MM min., 25-4-1741. Chester MM min., 25-1-1723.

opportunity arose. At one point in the controversy, Goshen appeared to admit that the seller simply had made a poor bargain; the Meeting continued prosecution of N. B. and disowned him. N. B. appealed the decision to Quarterly and then to Yearly Meeting, both of which reaffirmed his disownment.[15]

Wrightstown Monthly Meeting demanded that T. S. return the horse he had purchased from T. B. because T. S. "hath overreached the said [T. B.]. . . ." T. S. of Middletown Monthly Meeting had hired H. M. at low wages, H. M. having recently immigrated and being ignorant of "the methods of this country." The Meeting asked T. S. to raise his laborer's wages.[16]

There were forty-one cases of theft, almost all petty larceny. Among the objects stolen were a chain found lying on a highway, a grindstone, a hone, the produce from a neighbor's garden, hay from a meadow, the fruit of a neighbor's pear tree mischieviously picked one night.[17] Two men stole a pig. A woman stole one of her neighbor's chickens, after poisoning some others. In the opinion of Friends, W. M.'s practice of paying people to bring him stray animals which he then sold was substantially theft. M. T. was disowned for picking up a small sum of money laid down by another, then threatening violence against persons who observed his theft.[18] More offensive to Friends were S. B.'s "grievously reproachful" theft of a traveler's goods, R. W.'s theft of cloth at Wilmington Fair, and J. K's removal of the boards from the floor of the schoolhouse at Upper Darby. In the only case of robbery two Friends stopped, abused, and robbed J. W.

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[15]Goshen MM min., 11-3-1754 through 16-9-1759, 5-12-1760.

[16]Wrightstown MM min., 1-3-1768, 1-4-1768, 2-8-1768. Middletown MM min., 7-1-1700.

[17]Concord MM min., 13-3-1689. Goshen MM min., 17-7-1758. Exeter MM min., 30-8-1740. Sadsbury MM min., 6-7-1742. Uwchlan MM min., 6-12-1764. Abington MM min., 26-8-1776.

[18]Abington MM min., 18-7-1757, 16-10-1745. Darby MM min., 3-10-1753. Middletown MM min., 6-11-1755. Darby MM min., 29-9-1689.

one night. In another case Darby Monthly Meeting thought they had caught a burglar, but the accused explained that the coat he had taken from the house of R. P. had been stolen from him by R. P. When the accused later found it was not his coat, he returned it and condemned his slandering of R. P.[19]

On twenty-four occasions the Society disciplined its members for crimes against the government, as contrasted with criminal acts against persons. The Society demanded obedience to civil authority, "it being our duty," Friends wrote, "to demonstrate our loyalty and gratitude to the king and government under which we live, for the inestimable religious privileges, which through the blessings of Divine Providence are continued to us, by our willingly submitting to comply with all laws."[20] For example, Friends refused to join the American revolutionists not only because of their pacifism, but because of their loyalty to the king, which was clearly apparent on the eve of revolution when the revolutionists asked Friends to disobey certain laws, but not to employ force.[21]

Disobedience to the Navigation Acts, or smuggling, provoked the most frequent expression of concern from the Society. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting prepared a minute for its members in 1759 enjoining trade with the French and with the Spanish and Dutch neutral ports. "The purity of the profession we make to the world," it reads, "renders it incumbent upon us to deny ourselves of some prospect of worldly interest." Despite the expression of concern, only four men, all in Philadelphia, were accused of smuggling. In 1774 smuggling appears to have flourished, because in July 1774 Philadelphia Monthly Meeting reported to Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting that most of those engaged in dealing in tea were guilty of smuggling, although their number was not reported. Nevertheless, there were no prosecutions of

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[19]Goshen MM min., 18-7-1757, 16-10-1745. Darby MM min., 3-10-1753. Middletown MM min., 6-11-1755. Darby MM min., 29-9-1689.

[20]Phila. MM min., 29-6-1759.

[21]See p. 90. Friends could not join mercantile boycotts.

smugglers after 1759.[22]

Eight Friends were delinquent in payment of various other taxes and duties. James Logan brought to Middletown Monthly Meeting the names of three of its members who had not paid their quit-rents to the proprietor. J. H., Jr., attempted to evade paying a tax on single men by feigning marriage.[23]

Friends, besides being forbidden to resist authority by force, were obligated to cooperate with civil officials and respect authority. T. H. refused to go with an officer who was to take him into custody. T. A. was disowned for "refusing to answer such questions as the assessors thought necessary to ask him . . . and likewise for making too free with the character of one of the said assessors." C. K. "refused to work at the road (as he said for conscience sake) when warned thereto by the road supervisor." One Friend was prosecuted for only "speaking divers slightly and disrespectful words in derogation of the King, which this meeting highly resents, as being repugnant to our known principles and practice. . . ."[24]

Friends occupied many positions in the government of Pennsylvania, especially before 1758. The Society disciplined several such office holders for violating their trust. Three men, while serving as commissioners in Lancaster County, had taken more wages than the law permitted. Two of them returned the wages they had misappropriated and condemned their malfeasance, whereas the third, who died several months later, refused to return the money unless forced to do so by law. A constable from Goshen Monthly Meeting kept a sum of money he had received from a defendant in a lawsuit, which was to be forwarded to the plaintiff. A Quaker juryman from Bucks County agreed with his fellow jurors to flip a coin to decide the case being

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[22] Phila. MM min., 29-6-1759, 29-8-1755, 29-8-1756, 5-10-1759, 29-2-1760, 29-7-1774.

[23] Middletown MM min., 5-3-1709. Chester MM min., 28-10-1776. Gwynedd MM min., 26-11-1765, 29-4-1766.

[24] Middletown MM min., 4-10-1707. Bradford MM min., 18-5-1758, 15-6-1758. Phila. MM min., 25-9-1720.

tried.[25]

The effect of the French and Indian War upon Friends' attitude toward service in government has been described as a reversal of previous attitudes and an end of the "Holy Experiment." But Friends' fear of complicity in the war and the alteration the war brought about in the Society's attitude toward politics have often been exaggerated by the credit given to the propaganda of the contemporary political rivals of Friends.[26] In the minds of most Friends, concerns of conscience, which have been described as the cause of the change, were interwoven with considerations of power and provincial politics. Neither the strict pacifists nor their opposite, the Quaker politicians, were happy with the expedient middle way the Society pursued through the French and Indian War.[27] Before 1755 Quaker legislators had appropriated funds for warfare without discomfort to their individual or communal consciences (but with occasional hypocritical glosses on the legislation). In 1755 the fiscal demand was greater, the war was local, the political rivalry in the province was more intense, and Quaker consciences were more alert, preventing easy accomodation of Quaker ethics to war.

The Pennsylvania Assembly, controlled by Quakers and their political allies, passed a militia bill and a tax for war expenses. Some Quakers whose consciences were offended voted against the legislation; it nevertheless passed. The proprietary party found the legislation hedged with precautions against the growth of proprietary authority and provisions inimical to its present prerogatives, and, therefore, vetoed it. The proprietary party employed the pacifist testimony of the Society of Friends and the demur of some Quaker Assemblymen in the vote on taxes and militia to obscure its own veto and motives, and accused the Society of preventing the defense of the province.[28]

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[25] Sadsbury MM min., 18-4-1770, 17-10-1770, 23-1-1771. Goshen MM min., 21-6-1749. Middletown MM min., 3-12-1698.

[26] Boorstin, pp. 58-63. [27] Hanna, pp. 95, 96.

[28] Hanna, Chapters VI, VII. Theodore Thayer, Israel Pemberton (Philadelphia, 1943), Chapters VI, VIII.

In Great Britain, the credulous Privy Council, animated by a concern for the defense of the Empire, might have barred Friends from public office had Lord Granville, President of the Council, and English Friends not mediated the counterfeit crisis. Dr. John Fothergill, Peter Collinson, and several other English Friends who were acquainted with Lord Granville and other Privy Councillors begged Pennsylvania Friends to withdraw voluntarily from the Assembly in order to avert perpetual disqualification and to disarm the allegations of the proprietary party until the urgency of the wartime situation had passed and permitted Friends to resume office. Prudence, or expediency, was the plea of English Friends.[29]

The consciences of Pennsylvania Friends were not offended by mere participation in the government and Assembly. It was the vote on war legislation that threatened some consciences--not those Quaker politicians who felt no offense, nor those of the pacifist Assemblymen who voted nay and avoided the offense; but the consciences of Friends who disapproved of their brethren supporting the war with an affirmative vote.

The association of politicians and pacifists through their membership in the Society offended the pacifists when the politicians erred; yet the offended were too few to employ the Society to discipline their brethren. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1755 did not decide that the wartime demands of public office required all Quakers to decline public offices, or that voting taxes or a militia bill violated the discipline on pacifism. Israel Pemberton, clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Samuel Fothergill, brother of Dr. John Fothergill, and nineteen other Friends, in their private capacity and as a dissenting minority of Friends, declared that payment of the new tax violated Quaker religious principles.[30]

In 1756, upon the advice of English Friends and with expediency the object, Quaker legislators were urged to decline their offices.

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[29]Thayer, p. 114.

[30]Amelia M. Gummere, ed., The Journal and Essays of John Woolman (New York, 1922), p. 210.

Six Friends, including James Pemberton, brother of Israel, declined their offices, whereas others, led by Isaac Norris, refused. In the elections of October 1756 Friends were elected to sixteen of the thirty-six seats in the Assembly; however, four of them were persuaded to decline. The biographer of Israel Pemberton concludes: "The election plainly showed that Israel Pemberton's party was unable to influence many Quakers to forgo politics or did not care to do so."[31] Politics provoked no crisis of conscience in the Society of Friends in 1755-1756.

In 1758 the Yearly Meeting formulated a policy on office holding when some Quaker officials assisted the equipping of General John Forbes' military expedition. The Meeting advised that Friends withdraw from any government offices involving duties which conflicted with Friends' religious principles. Until 1775 and the American Revolution, there is no record of any Monthly Meeting asking Quaker office-holders to withdraw.[32]

Withdrawal of Friends from the government of Pennsylvania, had it occurred, would have fundamentally altered the Society which owed much of its renown and its uniqueness to the "Holy Experiment" and participation in the political order. Protestant sects rarely participated in a political state; even less frequently did sects have the opportunity to manage affairs of state as Pennsylvania Friends had. An abrupt abdication of political activity would have led Pennsylvania Friends closer to the normal behavior of Protestant sects. But the Society did not withdraw from the political affairs of this world and its decline in influence is attributable to political exigencies, not a strategic retreat.[33]

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[31] Thayer, p. 120.

[32] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 28-9-1758.

[33] See Troeltsch, Social Teachings, 331-341 for the relationship of the sect to the political state.

CHAPTER IX

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY AND THE DISCIPLINE

With the exception of the Keithian heresy and schism, the faith and conduct of Friends in Pennsylvania from 1682 to approximately 1720 created no problems for the enforcement of discipline in their community. Very few Friends were apprehended in common crime and even fewer violated the Society's mores on marriage, speech, and dress. In the largest Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia, the maximum number of offenses in any five-year period before 1720 was only fourteen.[1]

Since it is impossible to ascertain the causes of the individual offenses, one cannot deduce the cause of the paucity of offenses throughout the province, or the cause of the apparently ethical behavior of the vast majority of Friends in the halcyon decades after 1682. However, in lieu of detailed information, some tentative answers to the question of causation have been attempted.

The devoutness of the first-generation founders of a religious sect or church has been used to explain the ethical behavior of the early members of religious denominations and of early Friends in particular.[2] Pennsylvania Friends, 1682-1720, were first-generation immigrants from Revolutionary and Restoration England who had suffered discrimination and, some of them, injury to body and property. For them Pennsylvania was a haven where they practiced their religion without anxiety.

By 1725 all the founders of the Society of Friends and members of

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[1] The membership of the Society was not significantly greater after 1720. See Appendix A.

[2] Rufus M. Jones, Later Periods, I, 2, 3. H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York, 1929), pp. 19-20.

the first generation had died.[3] Although their devoutness cannot be measured in itself, it ought to have exceeded that of the succeeding generation and been reflected by a decline in the ethical behavior of Friends in the 1720's. Inspecting the records of the total disciplinary offenses in the Monthly Meetings of Pennsylvania one finds that after 1725--and earlier in some Meetings--the rate of delinquency is usually higher than in the preceding years.[4] In all Meetings the period 1725 to 1755 has a higher average rate than the period 1682 to 1725, the later rate describing a plateau between the pre-1725 rate and the steep increments of the post-1755 period. The increase in unethical conduct coincides with the change from the first to the second generation and may in part be attributed to that change and, according to those who hypothesize the difference in devoutness between generations, to the decline in devoutness.

For at least twenty years after the founding of Pennsylvania, Friends comprised a majority of the inhabitants of the province; not until approximately 1700 did the non-Quaker inhabitants attain a parity with Friends. In the first two decades, Friends had little competition from rival Protestant denominations and alien styles of life and ethics. While Friends were a majority, and perhaps longer, they possessed ecclesiastical, social, and political hegemony in Pennsylvania.[5]

Before 1700 the inhabitants were in largest part English and Welsh Quakers; there also were continental immigrants, pietists who practiced an ethical code as strict as that of Friends. In the first twenty years in Pennsylvania, the Keithian separatists provided the greatest accession to the non-Quaker denominations, and the separatists

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[3] Jones, pp. 104, 105.

[4] See Appendix B for the record of disciplinary offenses here and in subsequent references to the behavior of Pennsylvania Friends.

[5] Isaac Sharpless, Quakers in American Colonies, p. 459. W. F. Dunaway, "The English Settlers of Colonial Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LII (1928), 317-341.

professed a more rigorous ethic than that of their former brethren.[6]

The Great Law of Pennsylvania (1682) was a puritanical code which, excluding Friends' peculiar mores, resembled the discipline of the Society. Friends filled the legislative and executive offices, from the proprietorship to the ordinary magistracy, through which the laws were enacted and enforced. The political hegemony of Friends outlasted the ecclesiastical and social by at least two decades.[7]

Because of the predominance of Friends in the life of early Pennsylvania, the Society existed in a uniform, static environment which offered few competing or alluring styles of life and conduct, and few confusing, contradictory claims. Pennsylvania had no Merry-mount.

While the hegemony of Friends lasted, the rate of delinquency throughout the Society remained low; there was no appreciable increase in delinquency before 1700 and little for a decade or two thereafter. However, the coexistence of Quaker hegemony and ethical behavior proves little beyond those two facts; if hegemony affected behavior, a variation in the former should have produced a predictable variation in behavior, just as the passing of the first generation of Friends coincided with a decline in ethical behavior.

A change in the delinquency rate which might have been expected around 1700, when non-Quakers outnumbered Quakers, did not occur. However, 1700 may be too early to mark the decline of Quaker influence in Pennsylvania; for whereas Friends' predominance in the total population ended near the turn of the century, they remained the largest single religious denomination in the province until approximately 1720.[8]

While the proportion of Quakers to other churchmen and non-

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[6] William C. Braithwaite, Second Period of Quakerism, p. 483.

[7] Staughton George, etc., eds., Charter to William Penn, and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania . . . (Harrisburg, Pa., 1879). E. C. O. Beatty, William Penn as Social Philosopher (New York, 1939), p. 290. Harry E. Barnes, The Evolution of Penology in Pennsylvania (Indianapolis, 1927), p. 32. Lawrence H. Gipson, Crime and its Punishment in Provincial Pennsylvania (Bethlehem, Pa., 1935), p. 32.

[8] See p. 142 for statistics on denominational membership.

churchmen shifted in the years before 1720, the demography of southeastern Pennsylvania remained comparatively static: after the arrival of the Quakers in 1682-1700 there was little immigration until the first wave of Scotch-Irish immigration began in 1717.[9] That influx remained considerable until 1727 when it mounted in volume. The immigration of Palatine Germans also began in approximately 1717 and continued at a moderate rate until it swelled after 1730. When records of ship arrivals began to be kept in 1727, the rate of German immigration was five shiploads per year and by 1732 had grown to eleven per year.[10]

The heavy immigration also changed the social and economic character of southeastern Pennsylvania. Between 1700 and 1730 Philadelphia and the towns of Bucks and Chester counties stagnated in physical and economic growth and suffered an economic depression in 1722-1724. By 1730 the immigration that had mounted since 1717 caused the rapid expansion of Philadelphia, the urbanization of the back-country towns, and the rapid economic growth of the southeastern area.[11] The change did not escape the notice of Friends, whose expressions of anxiety over the comparative chaos of the 1730's and the immigrant population that engulfed Friends link the demographic change with the behavior of Friends.

The growth of alien religious and secular environment around the community of Friends had no necessary link with delinquency; however, in an annual epistle to London Yearly Meeting, contemporary Friends affirmed that such a link existed. "Greater circumspection," they wrote, "appears the more necessary by the great increase of people, not only of those born among us, but others of divers nations, customs

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[9] Dunaway, "English Settlers," pp. 317-341. See Appendix A.

[10] W. F. Dunaway, The Scotch Irish of Colonial Pennsylvania (Chapel Hill, N. Car., 1944), pp. 33-42. Ralph B. Strassburger, Pennsylvania German Pioneers (Norristown, Pa., 1934), I, xviii-xix, xxix.

[11] James T. Lemon, "Urbanization and Development of Eighteenth-Century Southeastern Pennsylvania and Adjacent Delaware," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., XXIV, no. 4 (Oct., 1967), 502.

and manners, which of late years have flow's in upon us, so that with grief we observe vice and immorality to increase."[12]

The objectionable presence of alien persons and practices was illustrated in the celebration of St. Patrick's Day. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting resolved:

> It being taken notice that of late much disturbance has been given to Friends as well as other sober inhabitants by firing guns and revellings occasioned by the classing together nationally numbers of people under the pretence of keeping a day to their saint called as Saint Patrick, etc., which being unusual heretofore in this country which was chiefly settled by sober people, and may be of dangerous consequence in several respects, this meeting therefore appoints Isaac Norris, Samuel Preston and Israel Pemberton to wait on the Governour and to request of him in behalf of Friends the favour that he will be pleased as much as in him lies to discountenance such doings for the future.[13]

The refusal of the Governor to prevent the celebrations marked a decline of Friends' influence over public conduct since the time, a quarter century earlier, when Friends alone had set the tenor of public life.

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting asked the mayor of Philadelphia to help prevent the disorder that Friends had observed in the city. The petition reads:

> The people called Quakers who (by far) were the greatest part of the early adventurers with our first proprietor (of the same persuasion) in the settlement of this colony, had chiefly in view a quiet, moral, and religious life which by the blessings of God many enjoyed for several years, to their comfort and the reputation of the country. But now for some time past upon the great increase of the people, it is too manifest, to our sorrow that vice and immorality greatly abounds, particularly in this city, where the excess is so remarkable, that it touches with deep concern, not only us, but all other the sober and well minded inhabitants.
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> The wickedness, disorder, profaneness . . . are so notorious and disturbing, that we conceive it cannot escape general observation. . . .[14]

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[12] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 19-7-1733.

[13] Phila. MM min., 27-1-1730.

[14] Phila. MM min., 31-6-1733.

The danger to the religious community which Friends perceived in the changes in Pennsylvania's citizenry is apparent in the disciplinary records of the Society; by 1730, eight of the eleven existing Monthly Meetings apprehended twice as many disciplinary offenses as they had in 1715, before the immigration began. In these eight Meetings the decade 1721-1730 marks the beginning of a significantly higher rate of delinquency that persisted until 1755 when a subsequent increase overshadowed the 1730-1755 rate.

Marriage offenses were more closely linked with the demographic change than delinquency in general, not only because of the particular nature of the offense--irregular marriages necessarily involved non-Quakers--but also because of the actual behavior of Friends after 1720. Because there were always some non-Quakers in Pennsylvania, Friends were never confined to endogamy; however, after 1720-1730, when the Quaker proportion of the population declined, the possibility of marrying a non-Quaker was enhanced. The disciplinary records support the relationship between marriage offenses and immigration even more consistently than that between total offenses and immigration. In Philadelphia and Abington Monthly Meetings, the two largest, irregular marriages were almost unknown until 1715 and 1720 respectively. By 1730 the rates of irregular marriages in all Monthly Meetings but Middletown far exceeded the rates previous to 1720.

The formal language in the records of some Monthly Meetings introduces some uncertainty into the conclusion on irregular marriages. The accusations against the offenders--"irregular marriage," "marrying out," and "marrying outside the Society"--could encompass either marrying a non-Quaker or marrying a Quaker in a ceremony solemnized by non-Quakers, so that the increase of marriage offenses in some Meetings does not represent an increasing number of non-Quaker spouses. However, in the Meetings that adequately described the marriage offense, the proportion of exogamous marriages to total marriage offenses grew from a minority in 1725 to a majority of three-quarters or more by 1765.[15] Although exogamous marriage is more closely linked with the

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[15]See Chester or Concord MM min.

abundance of non-Quakers than with the prohibited solemnization, the latter error is also naturally related to non-Quaker population.

Non-Quaker religious denominations multiplied concomitantly with the growth of non-Quaker population, increasing Friends' familiarity with other Protestant churches and the opportunity for marriage solemnized within them. In 1700 there were only two hundred Episcopalians, and by 1720 one Episcopalian, one Baptist, and one Presbyterian church in the city. In the whole province, by 1720 the Baptists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutheran and Reformed churches together had only sixteen congregations.[16] By 1730 the influx of immigrants added new congregations to their numbers. The Reverend Jedediah Andrews, Presbyterian, wrote in 1730:

> Such a multitude of people coming in, from Ireland of late years, our Congregations are multiplied; in this Province to the number of 15 or 16. . . . All Scotch and Irish, but 3 or 4.
>
> There is, besides, in this Province, a vast number of Palatines, and they come in still, every year. Those have come of late years, are, mostly Presbyt'n, or as they call themselves, Reformed, the Palatinate being about three-fifths of that sort of people. . . .[17]

The proliferation of non-Quaker congregations provided an increasing number of Friends with alternatives to marriage within their own meetings at a time when an increasing number of Friends obtained such prohibited marriages. Whether the errors of Friends were marriage with non-Friends or marriages solemnized by non-Friends, the errors were facilitated by the immigration and growing intimacy with non-Friends.[18]

Between 1730 and 1771 the standard of living in southeastern

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[16] Dunaway, "English Settlers," p. 338. W. F. Dunaway, A History of Pennsylvania (New York, 1935), pp. 336-352. A. H. Newman, A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States (New York, 1894), pp. 202-209. Guy S. Klett, Presbyterians in Colonial Pennsylvania (Phila., 1937), pp. 48, 54-57.

[17] Samuel Hazard, Register of Pennsylvania (Phila., 1835), XV, 200.

[18] Civil marriages were few in the Monthly Meetings which recorded the explicit nature of irregular marriages. See Chester and Concord MM min.

Pennsylvania rose in an unprecedented manner: in 1771 each person in Pennsylvania sold and received three times as much by value as they had in 1730. Friends, rather than being displaced from their established positions in the economy, profited from the economic growth out of proportion to their numerical status in the total population. Frederick Tolles finds that the number of Friends in the aristocratic class grew while Friends' proportion of the population of the province constantly decreased. Because the membership of the Society did not grow, the proportion of Friends within the Society who entered the aristocracy grew also.[19]

Wealth alone was not a sign of delinquency, but manifestations of wealth through vanity and immoderation were. The comments of contemporary Pennsylvanians and the disciplinary records reveal that greater numbers of Friends vainly exhibited their wealth.[20] A burgeoning economy in the mid-eighteenth century and the increased wealth of Friends created conditions conducive to an increase of errors of pride and immoderation in the era when an increase did occur.

The anxiety expressed by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1730 over the growth of profane conduct in Pennsylvania and its possible danger to the Society provoked no remedial action from the Meeting in the subsequent twenty-five years in which its anxieties were fulfilled. In all but three Monthly Meetings, the rate of delinquency attained by 1755 was at least double that of 1730; yet no policies, advices, or directives were formulated to treat the accelerating delinquency of the membership. The number of disowned Friends increased, but the proportion of those disowned was usually a minority of the offenders and a decreasing minority of the growing number of offenders before 1755.

With the exception of Thomas Chalkley, few prominent Friends and no meetings were aroused by the growth of delinquency in the Society.[21]

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[19] Lemon, p. 530. Tolles, Meeting House, p. 132.

[20] See Chapter IV and pp. 148, 149.

[21] Thomas Chalkley, Journal of Thomas Chalkley (London, 1751), pp. 203-204.

Silence characterized the religious community. In a later era, when numerous Friends grieved for the decline of their community, Samuel Fothergill, who had sounded the depth of the decline, recapitulated the history of Pennsylvania Friends:

> Their fathers came into the country in its infancy, and bought large tracts of land for a trifle; their sons found large estates come into their possession, and a profession of religion which was partly national, which descended like the patrimony from their fathers, and cost as little. They settled in ease and affluence, and whilst they made the barren wilderness as a fruitful field, suffered the plantation of God to be as a field uncultivated, and a desert. Thus, decay of discipline and other weakening things prevailed, to the eclipsing of Zion's beauty; yet was there a noble remnant, whose love was strong, and who remembered the Lord of the whole earth and his house, whilst they built their own.
>
> A people who had thus beat their swords into plowshares, and the bent of their spirits to this world, could not instruct their offspring in those statutes they had themselves forgotten. As every like begets its like, a generation was likely to succeed formed upon other maxims, if the everlasting Father had not mercifully extended a visitation, to supply the deficiency of their natural parents.[22]

Few Friends neglected God's plantation more than the man to whom its cultivation was chiefly entrusted, John Kinsey, clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Kinsey tended many plantations: he was clerk of Yearly Meeting from 1738 until his death in 1750; he was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly for nineteen years and its speaker for eleven; he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court for seven years and was the leader of the Quaker political party in the province. Until his death he was honored by most Pennsylvanians and respected by all; thereafter, the memory of him was an embarrassment to the Society. Kinsey, as one of the trustees of the General Loan Office, had used his authority to misappropriate £3000 or more for his own use. The fraud was discovered after his death by executors appointed by the Governor, one of whom was Israel Pemberton, Jr., the next clerk of the Yearly Meeting. The career of John Kinsey epitomized the pre-

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[22] George Crosfield, ed., Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Samuel Fothergill (Liverpool, 1858), p. 281.

occupation of some Friends with mundane affairs and, at his career's end, the triumph of the world over the ascetic spirit.[23]

The death of John Kinsey marked the end of an era in the history of the Society, the reawakening of conscience, and the rise of a new generation to the leadership of the Quaker community. Israel Pemberton, Jr., the greatest advocate of change, immediately succeeded John Kinsey as Clerk. For three years there were few obvious signs of change; then Samuel Fothergill arrived from England on a missionary journey throughout the colonies, and catalysed the efforts of American Friends.

Samuel Fothergill was one of the foremost members of the international community of Friends in the eighteenth century; minister and son of a famous minister, brother of Dr. John Fothergill, and friend of the most renowned American Friends and reformers--the Pembertons, John Woolman, John Churchman, Anthony Benezet, and others. Fothergill arrived in Pennsylvania in September 1754 for a journey that would last two years, cover at least seven thousand miles, and encompass visits to every Monthly and Quarterly Meeting in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and various meetings from South Carolina to Massachusetts. Of his mission, he wrote: " . . . it hath pleased the holy master to clothe my spirit with a concern for the renewal of the discipline in his family."[24]

Free from an enervating familiarity with the American environment and uninhibited by an intimacy with most American Friends, Fothergill was sagacious and candid, a deTocqueville and a Jeremiah to American Friends. Three months after arriving in America, and having visited meetings in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, he wrote to his brother from the Pennsylvania frontier that

> . . . indeed sorrowful is the state of the Church in these

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[23]Edwin B. Bronner, "The Disgrace of John Kinsey, Quaker Politician, 1739 1750," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXXV (1951), 400-415.

[24]Jones, Later Periods, pp. 13, 14, 16. Crosfield, p. 218 and throughout.

> parts; the same painful stupidity of heart . . . seems here also to spread and benumb the people, more especially those advancing into or near old age . . . the crooked footsteps of the old professors in part, and the lethargy of the morally clean, seem to threaten the utter extirpation of the profession from various parts of the province. I have been led into very close and laborious work amongst them, in their meetings and in their families, and to visit particulars . . . though through the hardest labor that I ever met with in public and private.[25]

Fothergill wrote to Israel Pemberton in May 1755, after they had separated from a joint missionary trip:

> I have been led, since we parted, into frequent and deep suffering, in the view and feeling sense of the suffering state of the Church all along, which sits in the dust, and has on her mourning weeds, although there are a few who have kept their garments clean; but the lamentable defection of those who would be thought the head, but are the tail,--I mean the more advanced in years, profession, and station amongst the people,--gives a painful prospect. And as it is hard to lift up a hand against grey hairs, my progress had been more difficult and afflicting than I can express.[26]

The hope of the church was its youth, Fothergill repeated in his letters. William Logan, who was traveling with Fothergill, wrote to Mrs. Fothergill that "The youth have a more promising aspect, and seem to be sensible of the declinsion of the Church, and zealous for restoring her primitive beauty, which is a cause of joy to the humble in heart, and those that are anxious on that account."[27] Among the American colleagues of Fothergill, only John Churchman was advanced in age; Israel Pemberton was thirty-nine in 1754, and his brothers, John, who would soon be clerk of the Meeting for Sufferings, and James, were younger than he. Israel Pemberton, in particular, raised the hopes of Fothergill; Fothergill wrote to him:

> I have often, dear Israel, remembered thee in a distinguished manner; being sensible the Lord of all power and wisdom would

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[25] Crosfield, p. 167.

[26] Crosfield, p. 187.

[27] Crosfield, p. 189.

> clothe with eminent qualifications for his service, in this day, in which the Church had on her sable weeds, and her priests are in bitterness. He who is the giver of every excellent gift hath endowed thee beyond many of thy contemporaries. . . . I have seen thee, dear Friend, in the hidden conflict, and the struggle between the two opposite powers, and have sympathized with and for thee, when thou has been bruised and hurt by the prevalence of that which stands as an armed man in thy way to rest.[28]

The private efforts of Samuel Fothergill, the Pembertons, and John Churchman began to register in the deliberations of Quaker councils in 1755 when measures were initiated for the reformation of the Society. At the Yearly Meeting in September 1755 a committee of fourteen Friends, including Fothergill, Churchman, and John Woolman, drafted a new discipline. Suffixed to it was an admonition for "elders overseers and all others active in the discipline to be zealously concerned for the cause of Truth and honestly to labour to repair the breaches too obvious in many places that there may be some well grounded hopes of the primative beauty and purity of the Church may be restored." To ascertain the response of the Monthly Meetings to the new discipline and the admonition for enforcement, the Yearly Meeting, at the same session, demanded that at least once every three months, a list of queries about the conduct of Friends be read in every preparative meeting and that every Monthly Meeting "distinctly and particularly" answer the queries at each Quarterly Meeting.[29]

The orders of the Yearly Meeting were not kindly received by some Friends. After resuming his travels and visits in 1756, Samuel Fothergill wrote to John Churchman:

> Our Epistle from Philadelphia to the Monthly Meetings meets with a different reception as the people differ; the libertines, worldly-minded, and opposers of the reformation in themselves and others cavil and rage; but the seed is relieved and the honest-hearted are strengthened, I see it will be a time of division of wheat and chaff, and that we shall find some amongst the latter we thought would have been more deeply weighty, and perhaps the contrary in some other instances.[30]

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[28] Crosfield, P. 192. [29] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 20-9-1755.

[30] Crosfield, p. 256.

In April 1756 Anthony Benezet wrote to Jonah Thompson, another of the fourteen authors of the new discipline, that Fothergill was still in the community, supplying "a very great support":

> a considerable part of the time [Fothergill spent] . . . in visiting the Families of Friends in this City to the Strength and Consolation of many honest seeking Souls, tho' not without contradictions & smitings, even from weak Brethren, the common Lot of the faithful impartial followers of Christ.[31]

Despite the recriminations, the separation of the wheat from the chaff began with alacrity; the number of prosecutions in the six largest Monthly Meetings, containing two-thirds of the Friends in Pennsylvania, increased by 75 per cent between 1755 and 1756. The critics of reformation were either a minority in the Society or without influence in the councils of the Society; the disciplinary machinery operated effectively and without interruption.

No opposition to reformation appears in the minutes of the Monthly Meetings or the statistics drawn from them. Three years later, Hanna Logan described Israel Pemberton and his supporters as "so hot in their zeal in carrying on the Reformation that they are in danger of Judging all who don't think as they do."[32] Yet judgments were even then being passed upon an ever increasing number of Friends and, by 1760, the total for the preceding five years would soar beyond the 1750-1755 total, doubling and even tripling in some Meetings.

The enforcement of particular aspects of the discipline further illuminates the reform of the 1750's. After 1702, when the Society ceased to issue periodic instructions on the costume of Friends, prosecutions of Friends for vanity of dress almost entirely disappeared: there was only one such case in Pennsylvania between 1701 and 1755. Between 1755 and 1776, however, there were fifteen such prosecutions and fourteen of the offenders were disowned.[33] Respecting shows of pride and vanity of all kinds--speech and gesture, as well as

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[31] George S. Brookes, Friend Anthony Benezet (Phila., 1937), p. 220.

[32] Tolles, Meeting House, p. 236.

[33] Ten of the fifteen offenses occurred in Philadelphia.

dress-the salient fact that emerges from the meeting records is that more than 80 per cent of the prosecutions occurred after 1755 and most of the remaining 20 per cent occurred before 1710. For almost half a century, while the community of Quakers was growing or maintaining its size, the Society's prosecutions of vain and immoderate conduct declined and almost disappeared. Unapprehended violations did occur, otherwise the sudden increase after 1755 would remain unexplained. The whole community of Friends did not suddenly engage in immorality in 1755 and thereafter; enforcement of the disciplinary rules, not obedience to them, explains the variation in prosecutions.

Friends enforced their nonviolent ethic more strictly after 1755 than they previously had. After 1755 the number of assaults recorded in the minutes increased from an average of one case per year to seven per year throughout Pennsylvania. Also, Friends disowned 62 per cent of the offenders after 1755 as compared with 40 per cent before 1755.[34]

In 1762 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting gave additional impetus to the reformation by strengthening the discipline on marriage, the article most frequently transgressed. The minutes of that Meeting read:

> A weighty concern attending this Meeting on account of the frequent transgressions of our Discipline in respect to marriages, which being confirmed by . . . the observation of the difficulties to which meetings are subjected through the increase of marriages accomplished contrary to the good order established in the Society, and the too ready acceptance of papers of acknowledgement from such persons on that account which had not only been matter of great trouble to Friends, but likewise introductive of many inconveniences, tending to promote libertinism, and a manifest deviation from the purity of our profession; It is therefore now earnestly recommended to Friends in their respective Monthly Meetings, that they be careful speedily to proceed to put the rules of our Discipline in practice against such transgressors, without waiting upon or solliciting for papers of acknowledgement from them, and that when such papers are offered for this breach of our Discipline, they be careful to be well assured, that they proceed from a true ground of conviction in the transgressor. . . .[35]

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[34]The calculations on disownments involve statistics from the ten largest Monthly Meetings in Pennsylvania.

[35]Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 1-10-1762. Emphasis added.

The instruction sharply increased the number of disownments and the severity of the whole reform movement after 1762. The instruction was more than a modification of enforcement, however, because it changed the intent of the discipline (on marriage only) from rehabilitation of the penitent to elimination of the offender. Or, it eliminated the offender who was reluctant to initiate the reconciliation by volunteering an acknowledgment. By prohibiting in fact as well as in theory all marriages with non-Quakers, the Society, in 1762, took a long step toward removing itself from intimacy with all other people--an increase in the "tribalism" of the Society.

To further curtail the "inconveniences" introduced by prohibited marriages and perhaps discourage such marriages thereafter, the Yearly Meeting decided in 1762 that it would no longer accept as members the children of those Friends who married irregularly. Quaker fathers or mothers, without the assistance of Quaker wives and husbands, had failed to rear their children to respect the discipline and testimonies of the Society, and, in consequence, the birthright, the acknowledgment of such an education, was removed from the offspring of mixed marriages.

Between 1760 and 1775, the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania probably disowned 22 per cent of its estimated membership of 1760. Philadelphia Monthly Meeting certainly disowned 16 per cent of its 1760 recorded membership. Goshen Monthly Meeting, more strict than either Philadelphia Monthly Meeting or the Yearly Meeting as a whole, disowned 32 per cent of its estimated 1760 membership. It has been suggested, on the basis of the misgivings of Hanna Logan and others, that the Society was in danger of schism in the 1750's. These anxious Friends mistook a purge for a schism. In the twenty years, there was no challenge to authority, no questioning of legitimacy, and no threat of secession from the Society. The reasons for the great majority of disownments were by no means novel or controversial, but ancient, ethical ones--irregular marriage, fornication, drunkenness- not heretical dissent, slander, slavery, or warfare. The weight of the disciplinary code, as well as the testimonies of Fox, Barclay, and other apostles of the church entirely favored the reformers; the delinquents could plead little but the leniency or neglect of the previous decades.

Reformation of the Society had barely begun when the French and Indian War broke upon the Pennsylvania frontier. Pennsylvania's citizens remained untouched by the conflict until October 1755, when the Indians made their first attack upon the frontier population--a month after Philadelphia Yearly Meeting rewrote the discipline and demanded its enforcement. In the succeeding months, the Indians exploited the defenseless province, spreading their attacks across the entire frontier.

Some Friends, especially the reform-minded, saw that the war and the present condition of the Society were related. A grim incident in Philadelphia suggested the relation to John Churchman:

> In the spring of 1756, I attended our general Spring Meeting in Philadelphia, at which we had the company of our dear friends, Samuel Fothergill and Catherine Payton, from Great Britain . . . at the time of this meeting, two or three of the dead bodies were brought to Philadelphia in a wagon, with an intent as was supposed, to animate the people to unite in preparations of war, to take vengance on the Indians, and destroy them. They were carried along . . . many people following, cursing the Indians, and also the Quakers. . . . The sight of the dead bodies was very afflicting and shocking to me. Standing at the door of a Friend's house as they passed along, my mind was humbled and turned inward, for it felt to me that many did not consider the sins of the inhabitants, pride, profane swearing, drunkenness, with other wickedness, were the cause why the Lord had suffered this calamity and scourge to come upon them. The weight of my exercise increasing as I walked along the street, at length it was said in my soul. This land is polluted with blood, and in the day of inquisition for blood, it will not only be required at the frontiers and borders, but even in this place where these bodies are now seen.[36]

Some years later, during the war, Churchman judged his generation explicitly:

> Alas! how dimness has overtaken us, when we compare ourselves and our practices, with the temperance and moderation of our forefathers and the early settlers of this province. How sumptuous now are our own tables, how rich and costly the apparel,

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[36] John Churchman, An Account of the Gospel Labours, and Christian Experiences of a Faithful Minister of Christ, John Churchman (London, 1818), pp. 209-210.

> the diet and the furniture, of many Friends even in the country; but more especially in the city! . . . And how much cost and time might be spared from needless things, and applied, to bettering our country and helping to turn away the judgement which hangs over us, in part occasioned by those things.[37]

Samuel Fothergill reacted thus to the events on the frontier:

> Unsearchable are the ways of Providence in the execution of judgments, and his steps in his holy sanctuary, to get himself a name: resentment, anger, and destruction to their enemies, seem to be the general reply to this awful voice, instead of a strict inquiry, "Is there not a cause?" Oh that this and our mother country may both learn righteousness, before the brandished sword of justice be unsheathed to their chastisement.[38]

The reformation of the Society was not the response of Friends to the war and not expiation for Quaker war guilt. The reformers had perceived the reasons for reform, had urged it and planned it before the lives of Pennsylvanians were lost; and once Pennsylvanians were dying, the Society did not assume the blame for the tragedy. Friends, especially Israel Pemberton, assigned the blame to the proprietor and his appointees who had discarded the wise and just Indian policy of William Penn and the Society of Friends.[39] Friends interpreted the war not as the sin of Friends, but as the punishment of Friends for their earlier sins; as Increase Mather had discerned the portent of King Philip's War for Massachusetts, Samuel Fothergill saw in the French and Indian War the displeasure of God with his people.[40]

Although Friends in politics retained the support and votes of

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[37] Churchmen, p. 265. [38] Crosfield, P. 257.

[39] Thayer, Israel Pemberton, p. 146.

[40] Perry Miller, The New England Mind: From Colony to Province, p. 32. Sydney V. James, while not perceiving the real nature of the reformation in the Society, states that "The most conspicuous change, however, was a reappraisal of the proper relation between Friends and the government of Pennsylvania, occasioned by the onset of Indian raids in the fall of 1755, the same event which brought the reform movement as a whole to a climax." The alleged reappraisal by Friends, as a church, did not occur in 1755-1757, and the Indian raids did not initiate or bring the real reformation to a climax. James, A People Among Peoples, p. 141.

the German population and other past allies, which was sufficient to enable the "Quaker party" to dominate the legislature of Pennsylvania, all Friends became the object of violent criticism by the proprietary party and the harried frontiersmen. The opposition assigned the blame for the bloodshed as categorically to Friends as Friends had assigned it to their opposition. But the contest among parties and proprietor rather than the scapegoat pacifism of the Society of Friends caused the delays in the defense of the province.[41] Regardless of the merits of the political controversy, the effect of the controversy was to make all Friends more conspicuous than they had been before the Indian attacks. John Churchman witnessed the use of dead victims of the Indians to arouse the emotions of Philadelphians against Friends. The Paxton Boys later threatened Philadelphia and Friends with outright violence. The proprietary party published the "guilt" of Friends on two continents.

The Society never conceded the accusations of its enemies, but did however, understand a need to assert its altruism or prove it, in response to the slander of its enemies. The "Friendly Association" was the first creation in a campaign of private philanthropy that Friends undertook after 1756--an amplification of an aspect of Quakerism so significant that Quakerism later connoted philanthropy.[42] Concomitantly, the prosecution of disciplinary errors and the disowning of offenders was accelerating. The relation between the reformation of behavior and the awareness of being a conspicuous minority appears in the increasing number and clarity of statements of disownment which display a sensitivity to scandal. Darby Monthly Meeting, for example, disowned J. K. "in order to clear truth and the society from such scandal (which it otherwise might in some measure be charged with). . . ."[43]

These examples of sensitivity appeared before 1755; their increase

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[41] Hanna, Franklin, Chapters VI, VII. Thayer, pp. 83-85, 120.

[42] James, Chapters X, XI.

[43] Darby MM min., 28-11-1765, 2-1-1766.

after 1755 may only be a function of the increased disownments after that date. However, the correlation between the two rates does not preclude a link between concern for reputation and sensitivity to scandalous errors, especially when Friends were at the same time proving their altruistic impulse through such endeavors as philanthropy.

It occurred to John Churchman, when he observed the bodies of Pennsylvanians killed on the frontier being carted through the streets of Philadelphia, that one sin, more than any other, had provoked God's displeasure with Pennsylvania:

> I said within myself, How can this [calamity] be? since this has been a land of peace, and as yet not much concerned in war; but as it were in a moment, my eyes turned to the case of the poor enslaved negroes. And however light a matter they who have been concerned in it, may look upon the purchasing, selling, or keeping those oppressed people in slavery, it then appeared plain to me, that such were partakers of iniquity. . . .[44]

The portent of war not only reaffirmed the mission of the reformers but broadened it to include abolition. The Friends who had labored before 1755 to reform the Society were among those who refused any cooperation with the war and who advocated abolition: John Woolman, John Churchman, Anthony Benezet, and John Pemberton. The current of reform, rising and encompassing more Friends and delinquents, buoyed the reformers on toward their objective of abolition.

Insofar as the defenders of slavery defended the torpid discipline of the 1730's and 1740's, they were being swept from the councils of the Society, and, if they were themselves delinquent, they were swept entirely out of the Society. The Friends who remained and whose counsel gained weight in the Society with the passing years, were the altruistic Friends amenable to additional reform, such as abolition. When the slavery issue came to the attention of the Yearly Meeting in 1758, Friends had a war on their border, the vituperation of their political enemies in their ears, and three years familiarity with reform. In 1758 Friends were better able to perceive their own faults than on any previous occasion in the eighteenth century.

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[44] Churchman, pp. 209-210.

The sanctions that the Society enacted in 1758 and placed on slave-purchasers for the following sixteen years removed some 39 purchasers from any positions of influence in the Society; however, by 1774 at least 1,800 other offenders had been disowned by the Society. It was the general reform of the Society, rather than the special and inconsistent discipline of slave purchasers, which prepared the Society for complete abolition in 1776.

The controversial and the novel articles of discipline, pacifism and abolition respectively, matured between 1755 and 1775. The reformation in the Society began as a revival of the most ancient and common ethical testimonies of Friends. Because it was composed entirely of what was old, the reformation was not revolution and got underway without counterrevolution or schism. The novel and untried testimonies, abolition and pacifism, germinated in the consciences of only a minority of Friends. The scope of the pacifist demands of the reformers in 1755-1757 was too broad and their particulars were rejected by the Society. The 1758 discipline on slavery was piecemeal, only anticipating abolition. When reform took a new direction the progress of Friends was not enthusiastic. Twenty years of separating delinquents from the church and of gradual accomodation of Friends to the spirit and purpose of reform had to pass before the drive for abolition and strict pacifism reached fruition in 1775 and 1776. Friends had to reinvest their ethical behavior with a sense of mission and regain the assurance that such behavior was the occupation of Quakerism, to be maintained in preference to accommodation to the environment, and, as in the American Revolution, at the cost of suffering. A concern for the world eroded ethics and blinded insight into evil; asceticism, in addition to its own merit of glorifying God, opened Friends to God's will for them as revealed through His world.

In the indulgent 1730's, reform was only burdensome and was easily postponed by the peculiar procedures of the Society: its abhorrence of dissent and its demand of unanimity in change. The unity that honed the Society to a fine instrument of God's will in one age, perpetuated its mediocrity in a later one. Unusual circumstances were required to free the church from its sleep, and although it is impos-

sible to discern here all the motivations of the men who initiated the reform in 1754-1755, the reforms that they initiated induced the originality in Quaker ethics from 1758 to 1776.

Upon the eve of the American Revolution, at least 1,800 Friends had already been disowned from the Society. The dismay of Friends at the prospect of scores of brethren volunteering for the war after twenty years of root-and-branch reform, and the defeat of the hope that the Society of 1775 was the saving remnant of the true church, may be easily understood. The American Revolution attracted scores of Friends who had never violated the ethics of the Society in the preceding decades and had not been prosecuted by the Society; some, at least, had been regarded as sturdy members. Yet not only those who volunteered for the army, but also the Friends who filled accessory offices, whose counterparts escaped censure in 1756, were disowned. The "winnowing of the people," which Samuel Fothergill had expected of the French and Indian War, occurred in the American Revolution; in the years after 1775, hundreds would be added to the thousands already disowned.[45]

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[45] Crosfield, p. 240.

CHAPTER X

CHURCH AND SECT

In the eighteenth century the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania underwent two changes: between 1730 and 1755, a slow decline in the ethical behavior of Friends and, between 1755 and 1776, a severe reform to reestablish the ethical standards of the community. As a result of the reform, perhaps 22 per cent of the members of the Society were disowned; besides drastically diminishing the population of the Society, the reform altered its character as well. Without information on each person who was disowned and each who remained, the qualities of the remainder and those of the outcasts cannot be deduced. Yet additional significance can be attached to the available information and the changes that the Society underwent can be illuminated by comparing this historical record with the formulations of Ernst Troeltsch.

Troeltsch found that certain ecclesiastical practices characterized fundamentally different religious communities, which he denominated "Church" and "sect." A Church, according to Troeltsch, desires to encompass all humanity and its life--social, political, and economic. In the attempt to incorporate the bulk and diversity of life, the Church must adapt itself to the object that it desires, and compromise its own characteristics in order to assimilate alien ones. Obviously, in the process of accommodation the Church may neglect its degree of influence over its constituents and the quality of their lives, but at least the nominal allegiance of all its constituents is the prime objective of the Church. The sect, Troeltsch thought, is a community of people who share a common religious experience and aspire to a common quality of life based upon their religious beliefs. To share their experience, promote individual excellence in their ethics, and to promote the same values in concert, they voluntarily gather into a community. The desire for excellence and rarification

of their qualities necessarily limits their membership and distinguishes them from the mass of men. The world is tested by their objectives and much of the world--social, political, and physical--is rejected.[1]

The descriptions and their designations, Church and sect, are sociological archetypes; few religious denominations satisfy every specification of either archetype. Although the Society of Friends in the seventeenth century demonstrated several characteristics that depart from the sect-type, numerous historians, including Troeltsch himself, have considered the Society and classified it as a sect.[2]

The anomaly of the Society as a sect was its involvement in economics and in politics as far as the laws of England and its colonies permitted. Friends were prohibited from political office by specific laws and, inadvertently or not, by their refusal to swear an oath. Had the restrictions and oath been removed, religious scruples would not have prevented Friends' participation and a consequent similarity to conservative churchmen--Anglicans and Presbyterians, for example--active in politics. They refused to participate, however, because they judged the political world by a strict Biblical standard--"Swear not at all"--and rejected it.

Friends encountered no prohibition from either their religion or their government in economic activities, and many rose beyond their modest economic origins. Yet asceticism was unmistakable in the lives and works of the apostles of Quakerism and became incorporated in the discipline of the denomination. The product appears contrived to create anxiety: Friends could amass worldly gain, but could not purchase worldly rewards.[3]

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[1] Troeltsch, Social Teachings, pp. 331-341.

[2] Troeltsch, p. 780. H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York, 1929), p. 40. Tolles, Meeting House, p. 240.

[3] From the description of Church and sect by Troeltsch, twenty-one specific characteristics of Church and sect have been enumerated by Liston Pope. The Society satisfies all the characteristics of the sect type except those mentioned. Pope, Millhands and Preachers (New Haven, 1942), pp. 122-123.

The immigration of English and Welsh Friends to Pennsylvania should have endangered their sectarian character, judging from H. Richard Niebuhr's amplification of Troeltsch's formulations. Troeltsch did not describe the conditions which provoked the formation of Churches and sects; his formulations comprised a typology which did not provide for change or evolution of the types. In fact, Troeltsch appears to have denied that types could evolve when he specified that "The word 'sect,' however, does not mean that these movements are undeveloped expressions of the Church type; it stands for an independent type of Christian thought."[4] Despite his demurer he included among the characteristics of Church and sect the social status of the members (high and low respectively)--characteristics which later historians and sociologists employed to change his typology into a dynamic system. Social status, which was only an ordinary characteristic in Troeltsch's formulations, became a controlling or contingent characteristic in the revisions of Niebuhr and others. In his work, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, Niebuhr emphatically stated: "Doctrines and practice change with the mutations of social structure, not vice versa; the ideological interpretation of such changes quite misses the point."[5] Niebuhr, employing examples from early modern history, and other students such as Liston Pope and Robert Doherty, who examined sects in North Carolina and the Society of Friends respectively, reaffirmed the intimate relationship between low social class and membership in sects. The consequence of altering the social status of the members is the loss of sectarian characteristics.

We might expect from Niebuhr's explanation that instead of creating a refuge for the preservation of their religious peculiarities, Friends ironically dealt their religion a more serious blow than had their persecutors in England. With the exception of their champion, William Penn, and a few others, Friends were the disinherited and the outcasts of English society. By immigrating to Pennsylvania they became the proprietors of the land, the legislators, judges, and magistrates of the government, and the arbiters of society. All students

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[4]Troeltsch, p. 338. [5]Niebuhr, p. 211.

agree that the sect inhabits the periphery of society, politics, and the economic order. By crossing the Atlantic, Friends had moved from the periphery of the world to the center; an alteration of their religious practices should have soon followed.

The disciplinary record and other historical records from 1682 to approximately 1720 show little evidence of the ecclesiastical change that might have been expected from the radical change in the status of Pennsylvania Friends. With respect to membership, the Society did lose part of its sectarian character; the sect is populated with converts, but the Society in Pennsylvania was populated by immigrants already converted and was perpetuated by their offspring. Converts were few. Friends became immersed in politics. In Pennsylvania, unlike England, the test of an oath did not disqualify them and by participating in government they were not otherwise violating their religious beliefs. Although some Friends became wealthy in Pennsylvania, shows of wealth in dress and furnishings were carefully prohibited by the Society before 1710. To a very large degree, Friends preserved their sectarian characteristics; their example refutes Niebuhr's dictum that ecclesiastical change must follow social change.[6]

Although Niebuhr theorized that ecclesiastical practice changes with social status or practice, he also stated that "By its very nature the sectarian type of organization is valid only for one generation."[7] Whereas Friends' perpetuation of their sectarian character for forty years refutes Niebuhr's dictum on social class, the Society did change after the death of the first generation of members, as Niebuhr predicted that all sects must. The perseverance of Friends in their primitive character is more pronounced when compared with Liston Pope's discoveries about the North Carolina sects: of thirty-one sects which he studied, twenty-one had clearly changed within ten years, and all had changed, some completely, within forty years.[8]

The perseverance of Friends is in part related to the uniqueness

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[6]Niebuhr, Chapters II, III. Pope, Chapter VII. Robert W. Doherty, The Hicksite Separation (New Brunswick, N. J., 1967).

[7]Niebuhr, p. 19. [8]Pope, p. 121n.

of their environment as compared with that of all the other examples of Pope and Niebuhr. Until renewed immigration to Pennsylvania after 1717, the Friends there inhabited an unusually homogeneous and static society; in fact, they comprised or dominated the society of the province. Because most of the characteristics of a sect are expressions of its basic alienation from society, and its decline is constituted by its integration into society, the decline of Quaker sectarianism in Pennsylvania is difficult to comprehend; Friends had no society which they might easily adopt before 1717. Unless all Pennsylvania is considered an enclave alienated from the society of the British Empire since 1682, alienation and integration are difficult concepts to apply to this historical situation. A static, homogeneous environment appears to have checked the evolution of sect into Church. The effect of an alteration of the environment upon sectarian character could be more clearly perceived had the environment of Friends not altered in the 1720's. Immigration in the 1720's, the cause of the alteration, coincided with the death of the first generation of Friends, which has also been used to explain Friends' conduct; the case for the effect of environment on conduct is therefore weakened. The effect of economics and social class upon sectarian characteristics should, however, be couched in more permissive terms than the ineluctable ones Niebuhr uses and alienation should receive more attention, as, for example, Doherty gives it in his study of Friends.[9]

Between 1720 and 1730 the Society's evolution toward the Church-type began and accelerated until 1755. The adoption of "birthright" membership in 1737 was a major change, for thereafter the religious community would not be one composed of adults who had experienced a conversion and volunteered to join their brethren. Friends in Pennsylvania had not been augmenting their numbers by conversions, but had approximately maintained them by the admission of their children. In the 1737 policy, Friends admitted they were not the religious community of the seventeenth century. Nominally, the membership had changed, yet Friends were reluctant to have it change superficially: the chil-

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[9]Doherty, Chapter VI.

dren had to be reared in obedience and reverence to the testimonies of the sect. But because birthright admission was a contract for future good conduct, whereas a confessional test acknowledged present behavior, the birthright was only as valid as the education of the children and the discipline of the Society was effective. Both notably failed after 1730.

The discipline languished after 1730 when it was confronted with an increase in all forms of delinquency and should have been particularly vigorous. The Society's performance of its disciplinary function indicates a diminishing concern for the conduct of the community and indulgence of the behavior that was formerly regarded as error. A desire for personal perfection, wrote Troeltsch, is a motive for joining a sectarian community. When the community's concern for behavior diminishes, a reason for its existence is denied.

Irregular marriage, the most frequent disciplinary error, discloses additional information about the sectarian community. Marriage with a non-Friend was the gravest violation of the intimacy with the world which the Society prohibited and a great temptation to discard religious peculiarities for the sake of harmonious coexistence with an unconverted spouse. For the religious community which desires to maintain its peculiarity and insularity, marriage must remain endogamous. Between 1730 and 1755 the Society of Friends permitted hundreds of Friends who had married non-Friends to remain within the Society. The uniformity of the sect and the preservation of its characteristics was seriously harmed by that indulgence.

In seventeenth-century Pennsylvania, Friends engaged in politics without jeopardizing their religious principles; they tested the political world and found it amenable to them. In the eighteenth century, politics became inimical to Quaker ethics by the demands of war; rather than reject politics, Friends became accomplices to war when they voted appropriations for King George's and the French and Indian Wars. Friends still tested the world--they would permit no member to join the armed forces--yet they felt no compunction about paying for the conflict.

Some Friends were wealthy before 1730; more became wealthy afterwards. The difference between the earlier and later generation of

Friends was the ostentatious use of their wealth: asceticism was practiced before 1730, but was increasingly ignored thereafter. Clothing, homes, furnishings, carriages, menus, weddings, even funerals became lavish. The overseers, Monthly Meetings, and weighty Friends occasionally lamented the affection their brethren showed for the world, yet they provided no remedy until 1755. The conspicuous Quaker testimonies that remained--the plain speech and the unadorned clothes--were hypocritical acknowledgments that conscience paid to error. By the 1750's the sect was well along the evolution toward the Church-type.

One of the primitive qualities of the Society as sect was beyond reclaim, perhaps by 1730. The membership could never again regain its early composition, the abundance of converted members and voluntary believers. Naturally, the converted wanted their religion to be the patrimony of their children and within one generation the sect was asked to grant the parents' wish by admitting their children. Soon the wish was fulfilled and the composition changed. Religious life appeared constrained to a biological cycle and sectarianism to a natural death. If there must be a parity of converted and birthright members, as Pope indicates in his description of a sect, and if the generation of converts reproduces its numbers, the sect and the Society would have to grow geometrically. A sect would quickly encompass all humanity--which would cause it to resemble a Church.

After 1755 Friends initiated a reformation of the Society which attempted to reclaim the primitive qualities of a religion. Without the modern insight into their Society as sect, Friends, of course, did not understand their reformation as an attempt to reverse the evolution of sect into Church, nor were they burdened by any analysis which claimed that their task was destined to fail.

Friends could not reconstitute the Society as it had been thirty or more years earlier, yet they did insist upon fulfillment of the contract, made in 1737, which had brought the Society to its present composition. The duties of the birthright were enforced upon the parents, who had to educate their children, and upon all adults, who were expected to know error and to avoid it. And in 1763 the Society ended a major abuse of birthright membership by removing the birthright from the offspring of mixed marriages.

After 1763 exogamous marriages were decisively and severely punished. Magnanimity in the treatment of most offenders was a virtue; however, decades of pardoning Friends for exogamous marriage had proved a greater danger to the Society than the pardoning of any other offense. Sympathy for the offenders had to be replaced by a concern for the whole community and its preservation.

The dangerous intimacy of the Society with the state was forced upon the attention of all Friends in Pennsylvania in 1755 and 1756, although the effort to have the Society disengage itself from the state to free Friends from complicity in war did not succeed. In 1775 the disengagement was accomplished. Even then Friends had no principle which categorically denied participation in government; they refused to participate on that occasion because they chose to preserve their pacifism rather than their intimacy with the world.

Likewise, after 1755 the Society did not prohibit the economic ventures of its members out of respect for asceticism. It did begin prosecuting the show of wealth, as in dress and lavish celebrations. By the nineteenth century the Society would adopt a uniform, dull garb which would become a renowned characteristic of Quakerism.

Finally, some of the spirit of early Quakerism was regained, although the prospect of seventeenth-century Friends--their apocalypticism, their fervor, their heaven and earth--was well beyond recall. In Friends' campaign against slavery living principles complemented rules of conduct, and in Friends' refusal to support war, partial in the 1750's and complete in the 1770's, the vision of a suffering church reappeared to Friends. The sense of alienation from society, which modern students seek to identify, returned to a degree that had been missing since Friends departed from England in the seventeenth century.

The accomplishment of Friends between 1755 and 1775 was unique; they reversed the evolution of sect into Church. Niebuhr denied that such reversal was possible. Troeltsch, by way of denying that the archetypes could change at all, assumed that the change would be from sect to Church. Pope found no evidence that a sect could regain its primitive character. The evolution of sect into Church had a biologi-

cal inevitability.[10]

But the Society of Friends did regain its primitive characteristics. Friends curtailed their intercourse with the world: they disowned hundreds of members who married non-Friends; they refused pomp of the world--its fashionable dress, furnishings, and ceremonies; they withdrew from the politics of war and practiced pacifism more consciencously than they ever had before. They scrupulously inspected personal conduct: instead of pardoning and indulging fornicators and drunkards, as was the custom before 1755, they disowned hundreds of such offenders; they demanded sobriety, reprimanding raucous speech and conduct, idleness, debt, and neglect of livlihood. Despite an admirable history of non-violence, Friends questioned their record and concluded that keeping Negro slaves denied the love of God-in-man that Friends professed. In all its details, the discipline of the church--the codification of the "primative purity" of Quakerism--truly described and governed the Friends in Pennsylvania after 1755.

The Society of Friends never wholly regained its primitive character, nor did it reconstitute its membership as it had been in 1682. But by the use of education and discipline, which are alleged to be signs of the decline of a sect, it reversed its decline and regained most of the characteristics that it possessed in its first generation.

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[10]Troeltsch, p. 338. Niebuhr, p. 21. Pope, p. 120. This conclusion has been denied in theory by a sociologist, Benton Johnson. He writes: "Most research within this [sect-Church] framework has been done on Calvinist-type denominations, indeed denominations of a revivalistic, moralistic sort. Their development toward a more sedate middle-class norm has been noted. In other words a particular kind of ethico-ritual system has been focused on. Paradoxically those radically "anti-worldly" groups, which Troeltsch would unhesitatingly have called Sects, cannot be understood so clearly in terms of the Sect-to-Church hypothesis. The major historical trend of the Amish, the Shakers, or to a lesser extent the Quakers can scarcely be understood as a simple process of "accommodation" to the values of the outer society. It seems safe to say that despite some astute and valid observations that Niebuhr makes in presenting his Sect-to-Church hypothesis, the actúal developmental sequence he poses is pretty much confined to voluntaristic Calvinist Sects in a mobile society." Johnson, "A Critical Appraisal of the Church-Sect Typology," American Sociological Review, XXII (Feb., 1957), 91.

Decline is not inevitable, and education, or discipline, is the necessary preventative, the necessary product of age in a sect. To the discipline of the Society and the enormous resolve of Friends to employ it, belongs the credit for the unique achievement.

APPENDIX A

Any conclusions drawn from the statistics on offenses in Appendix B must incorporate some consideration of the fluctuations in Quaker population between 1682 and 1776. The absolute number of offenses committed by Friends in Pennsylvania in a given year is not a useful figure unless it is compared with the number of Friends in Pennsylvania in the same year. Likewise, comparison of the figures from one year with those of another is not useful unless the figures are per capita quotients.

It would be fortunate for this consideration if Friends had kept annual or periodic lists of their members, but they kept records of only births, deaths, and, in some meetings, conversions. Only a laborious collation of these statistics would produce a census. Other reliable information comes from Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, which took censuses of its members in 1760 and 1772.[1] From these we know what happened to Philadelphia membership in twelve years. The remainder of Pennsylvania Friends for the remainder of a century will probably remain uncounted until someone collates the births and deaths. However, Pennsylvania Friends need not go unestimated until that collation.

We can employ the facts about Philadelphia Friends in 1760 to estimate the number of Friends throughout Pennsylvania in that year. To make the estimate all we need is a ratio of the size (population)

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[1] MS Census, Dept. of Records. The census was reported in The Friend, LXXI, no. 2 (July 31, 1897), p. 10. It reports 2,250 Friends in 1760. By recounting the entries in the manuscript, the author reached a total of 2144. This figure is less than 2,250 because in the manuscript some names have been deleted because of disownments after 1760. The 1772 census reports 1064 Friends. This total is far less because Philadelphia Monthly Meeting was divided in 1772. The number of Friends remaining in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting proper was 1064.

of each meeting to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. What we have is a record of the contributions of all meetings to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and thereby, the ratio of each meeting's contribution to that of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. If each meeting were assessed on a per capita basis, contributions would vary directly as to membership. Contributions were reassessed periodically when a meeting would complain of a disparity between its size and its contribution. A committee would be appointed to inspect the present apportionment and see if an inequality existed and had to be eliminated. In the records of the complaints and the deliberations of the committees it is nowhere specifically mentioned that a per capita standard was employed in assessing the meetings. To the prejudice of an attempt to estimate membership, the committees might have considered the ability of persons to pay. The few insights into their deliberations as exist are gained from the meeting minutes on the occasion when a meeting decided that the proportions were inequitable and requested a readjustment. In 1703, the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting requested

> that the Monthly Meeting of Harford would consider of the great changes that lyes hard on this Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia, and it is thought that they may be more capable to add to their former proportion, having severall Friends added to their Monthly Meeting.[2]

In 1723, Goshen Monthly Meeting requested a reapportionment because "the capasity of Meetings may differ since the first regulation therein."[3] In 1757, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting appointed a committee to reapportion the contributions of the Quarterly Meetings because of "increase" or "decrease" of the same Quarterly Meetings.[4]

This language will not permit any final conclusions on the elements considered: population, wealth, or still others. But population must have been one, and a considerable one. Tentatively acknowledging that contributions did vary with population shifts, the follow-

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[2] Phila. Quarterly Meeting min., 6-10-1703.

[3] Chester Quarterly Meeting min., 13-3-1723.

[4] Phila. Yearly Meeting min., 22-9-1757.

ing is a table of memberships of meetings in 1760 calculated from the census of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in that year.

Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting[5]

	Full Collection	Membership
Philadelphia MM	£35	2,250
Abington MM	£15	1,023
Gwynedd MM	£ 6	477
Radnor MM	£ 5	341
Exeter MM	£ 3	205
Richland MM	£ 3	205
	£65	4,501

Bucks Quarterly Meeting[6]

	Half Collection	Membership
Falls MM	£1-10s	417
Buckingham MM	£1-10s	417
Wrightstown MM	£1	278
Middletown MM	£1	278
	£5	1,390

[5] This apportionment of contributions within Phila. Quarterly Meeting was made in 1762 and continued through 1772. The apportionment of contributions within the Yearly Meeting was made in 1757. Cf. note 4.

[6] This apportionment of contributions within Bucks Quarterly Meeting was made in 1739. There is no record of a reapportionment between 1739 and 1760 on the Quarterly Meeting records. Bucks Quarterly Meeting minutes, 30-6-1739. The amounts listed equal a half collection.

Chester Quarterly Meeting[7]

	Full Collection	Membership
Goshen MM	£2-14s	467
Chester MM	£2-12s	450
Concord MM	£2-10s	433
Nottingham (Md.) MM	£2- 5s	372
Newark MM	£1-17s	320
Newgarden MM	£1-15s	303
Wilmington (Del.) MM	£1- 8s	245
Darby MM	£1- 6s	225
Bradford MM	£1	173
Duckcreek (Md.) MM	£1	173
Sadsbury MM	£1	173
Hopewell (Va.) MM	5s	43
Fairfax (Va.) MM	5s	43
Warrington MM	5s	43
	£20	3,463

Total membership of the three Quarterly Meetings of Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester	9,354
Total membership of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting[8]	13,846
Total number of Friends in Pennsylvania[9]	8,478

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[7]This apportionment of contributions within Chester Quarterly Meeting was made in 1753. The next one was made in 1775. Chester Quarterly Meeting min., 13-8-1753. In 1758 nine of the Monthly Meetings in Chester Quarterly Meeting were transferred to the newly created Western Quarterly Meeting. Although our object is to estimate membership in 1760, the financial basis of our caluclations in the Yearly Meeting reapportionment of 1757. Therefore, these Monthly Meetings are listed in the Quarterly Meetings to which they belonged in 1757.

[8]This total includes the three Quarterly Meetings in New Jersey whose contributions comprise 33 per cent of the Yearly Meeting collection.

[9]This total excludes from the three-Quarterly-Meetings total the Monthly Meetings in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. This total may be slightly large because the members of some Monthly Meetings in Bucks Quarterly Meeting (Bucks County) had constituents from Maryland.

To ascertain whether the population of Friends varied or not, it is necessary to have an estimate of population for another, earlier year to compare with that of 1760. Statistics from the early eighteenth century are less abundant and less reliable than those for 1760. They are not really statistics but estimates by eighteenth-century Pennsylvanians, most of which are collected in American Population Before the Federal Census of 1790.[10] Isaac Sharpless had made the most thoughtful use of such estimates to attempt an estimate for all of Pennsylvania in 1700.[11] He infers that there were 20,000 Friends in Pennsylvania then, which, he cautions, is doubtlessly too large a figure. From his calculation one can deduce a doubtlessly too large figure of 6,700 Friends living in Philadelphia in 1700 and belonging to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. Now two points are available with which to plot a line.

Philadelphia Quaker population in 1700 is estimated at 6,700. In 1760 it was certainly 2,250. Pennsylvania Quaker population in 1700 is estimated at 20,000. In 1760 it is estimated at 8,478. Rather than growing, the Society apparently decreased in membership. Granting that the estimates for 1700 are exorbitant, if we decrease them by half, or two-thirds, they are about equal to, or still larger than the 1760 figures. Although the estimates are imprecise, it is nevertheless certain that the increase in Quaker population, if any, was in no degree commensurate with the increase in the number of delinquencies reported in the period 1682-1776.

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[10] E. B. Greene and V. D. Harrington, American Population Before the Federal Census of 1790 (New York, 1932).

[11] Rufus Jones, Isaac Sharpless, and Amelia Gummere, The Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1923), pp. 459, 522, 524.

APPENDIX B

The following graphs record, at five year intervals, the number of offenses committed in each Monthly Meeting, the number of offenses pardoned, and the number punished by disownment.[1] The upper line in each graph records offenses and the lower line, offenses pardoned; the difference between the two lines is the number of offenses punished by disownment. Fluctuations in these three quantities indicate not only the amount of delinquency apprehended by each Meeting, but also alterations in the treatment--toward either leniency or severity--of delinquency.

In the case of all but three Monthly Meetings, marriage offenses were likewise recorded because of their large number and special significance in an endogamous, religious community.[2]

The number of offenses recorded should not be confused with offenders; offenders were often charged with multiple offenses and the graphs record the latter, not the former. In two Monthly Meetings quite different in character, Philadelphia--very large and urban--and Goshen--medium size and rural--, the ratio of offenders to offenses was 71/100 and 59/100 respectively. From this and other data (in Appendix B, Part II), estimates of offenders and disowned offenders in Pennsylvania were made.

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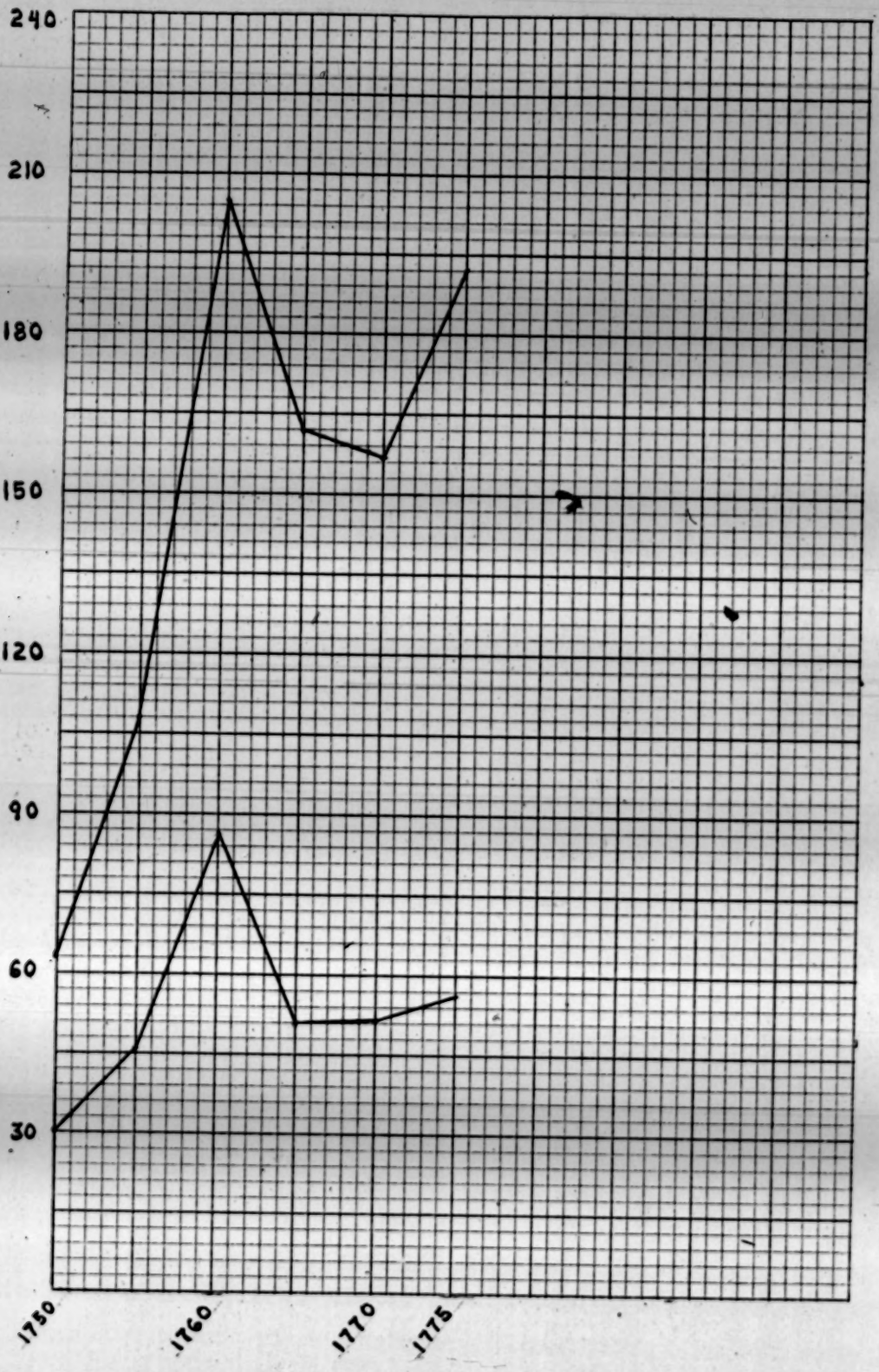
[1] Philadelphia Northern and Philadelphia Southern District Monthly Meetings, created out of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in 1772, are not itemized separately, but included in the parent Meeting.

[2] Buckingham, Richland, and Uwchlan were excepted because of incomplete records or the paucity of total disciplinary offenses.

1760 Membership: 1,023

Abington Monthly Meeting (1682-1750)

Total Offenses



Abington Monthly Meeting (1750-1775)

Total Offenses

Abington Monthly Meeting (1682-1775)

Marriage Offenses

Bradford Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

Total Offenses

1760 Membership: 173

Bradford Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

Marriage Offenses

Buckingham (Women's) Monthly Meeting

Total Offenses

1760 Membership (Men and Women): 417

Chester Monthly Meeting (1681-1775)

Total Offenses

1760 Membership: 450

Chester Monthly Meeting (1681-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 433

Concord Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Total Offenses

Concord Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Marriage Offenses

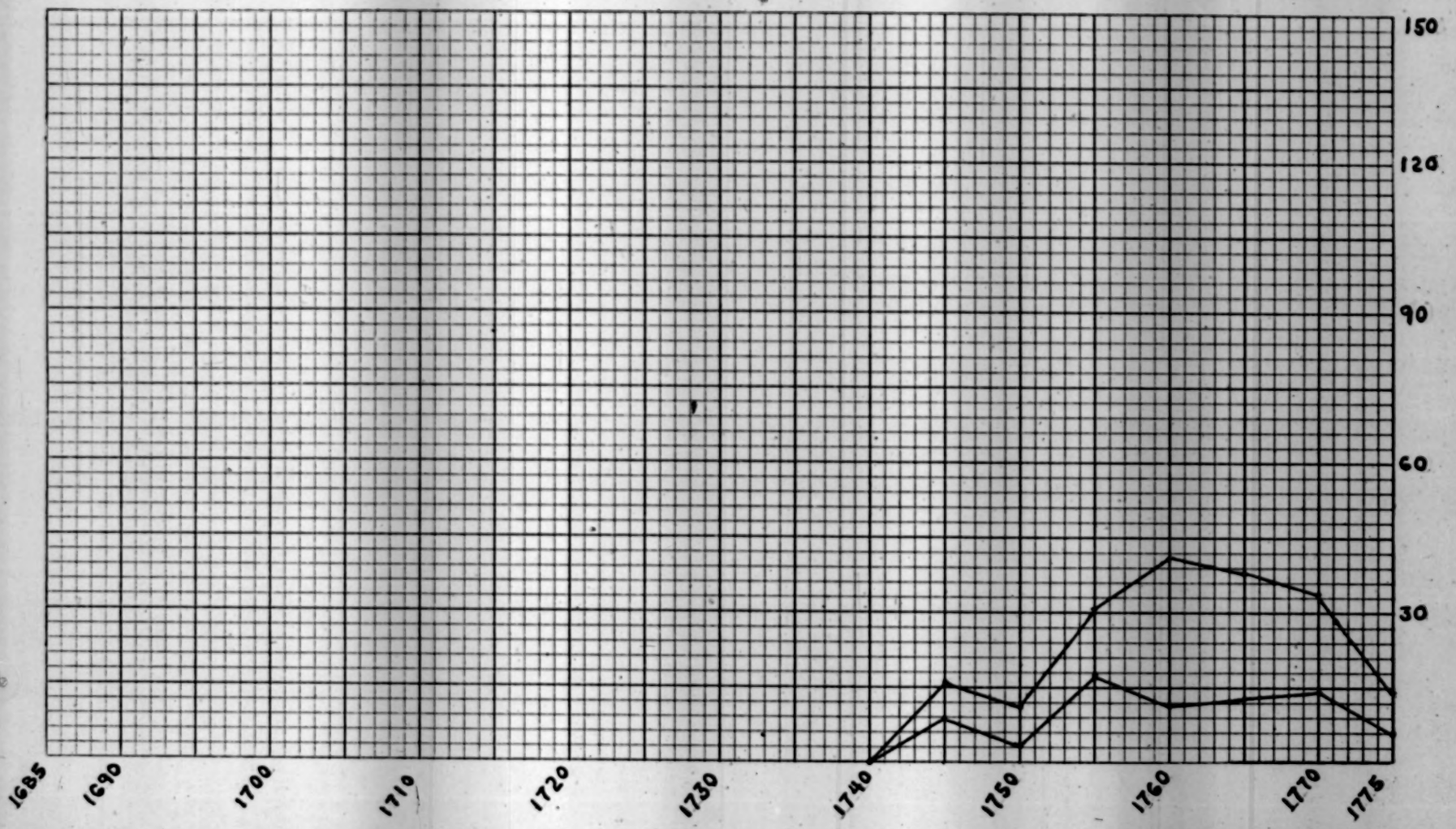
Darby Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Total Offenses

1760 Membership: 225

Darby Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Marriage Offenses



Exeter Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

1760 Membership: 205

Total Offenses

Exeter Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 417

Falls Monthly Meeting (1683-1775)

Total Offenses

Falls Monthly Meeting (1683-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 467

Goshen Monthly Meeting (1722-1775)

Total Offenses

Goshen Monthly Meeting (1722-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 477

Gwynedd Monthly Meeting (1714-1775)

Total Offenses

Gwynedd Monthly Meeting (1714-1775).

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 278

Middletown Monthly Meeting (1683-1775)

Total Offenses

Middletown Monthly Meeting (1683-1775)

Marriage Offenses

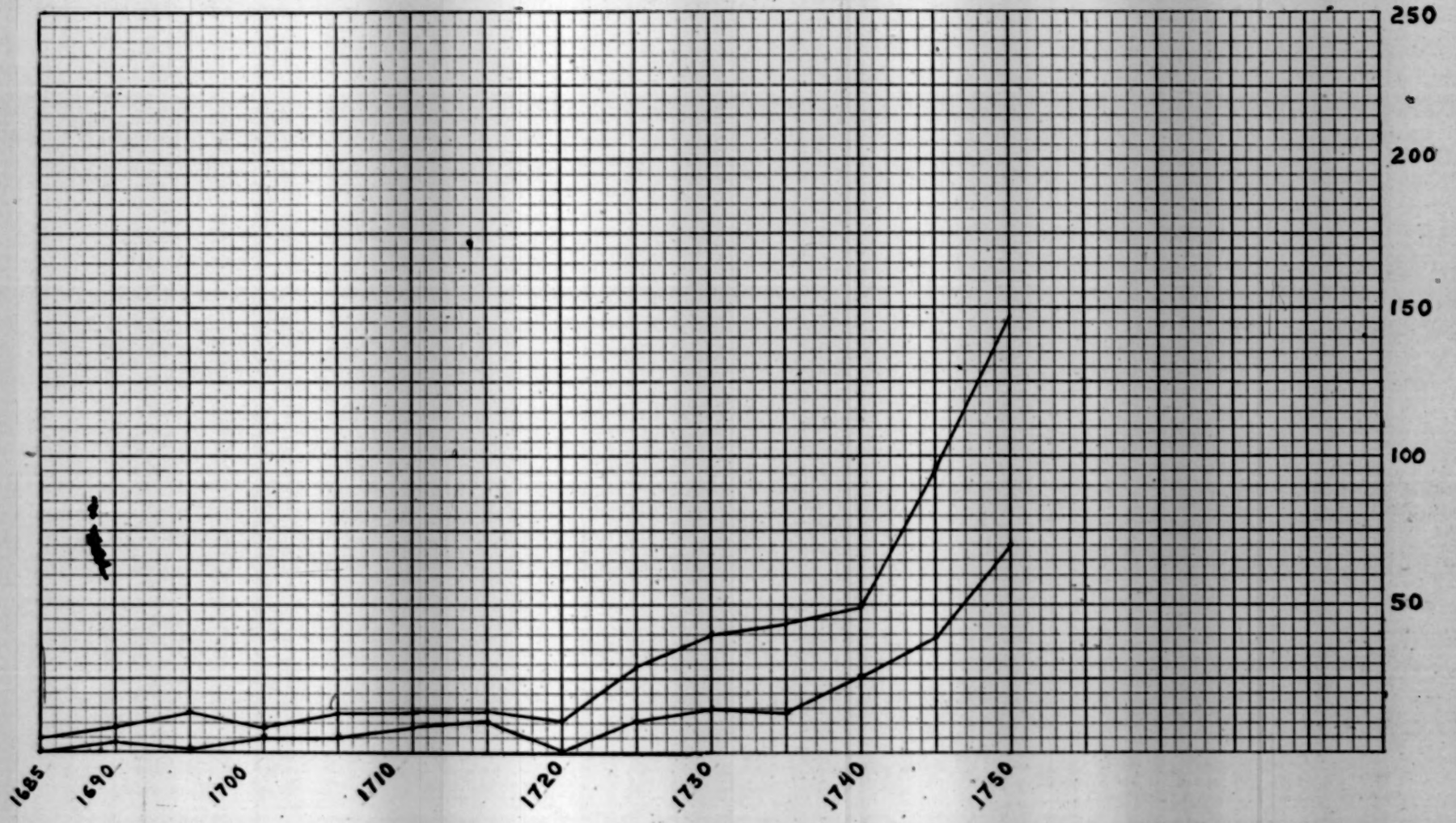
1760 Membership: 303

Newgarden Monthly Meeting (1718-1775)

Total Offenses

Newgarden Monthly Meeting (1718-1775)

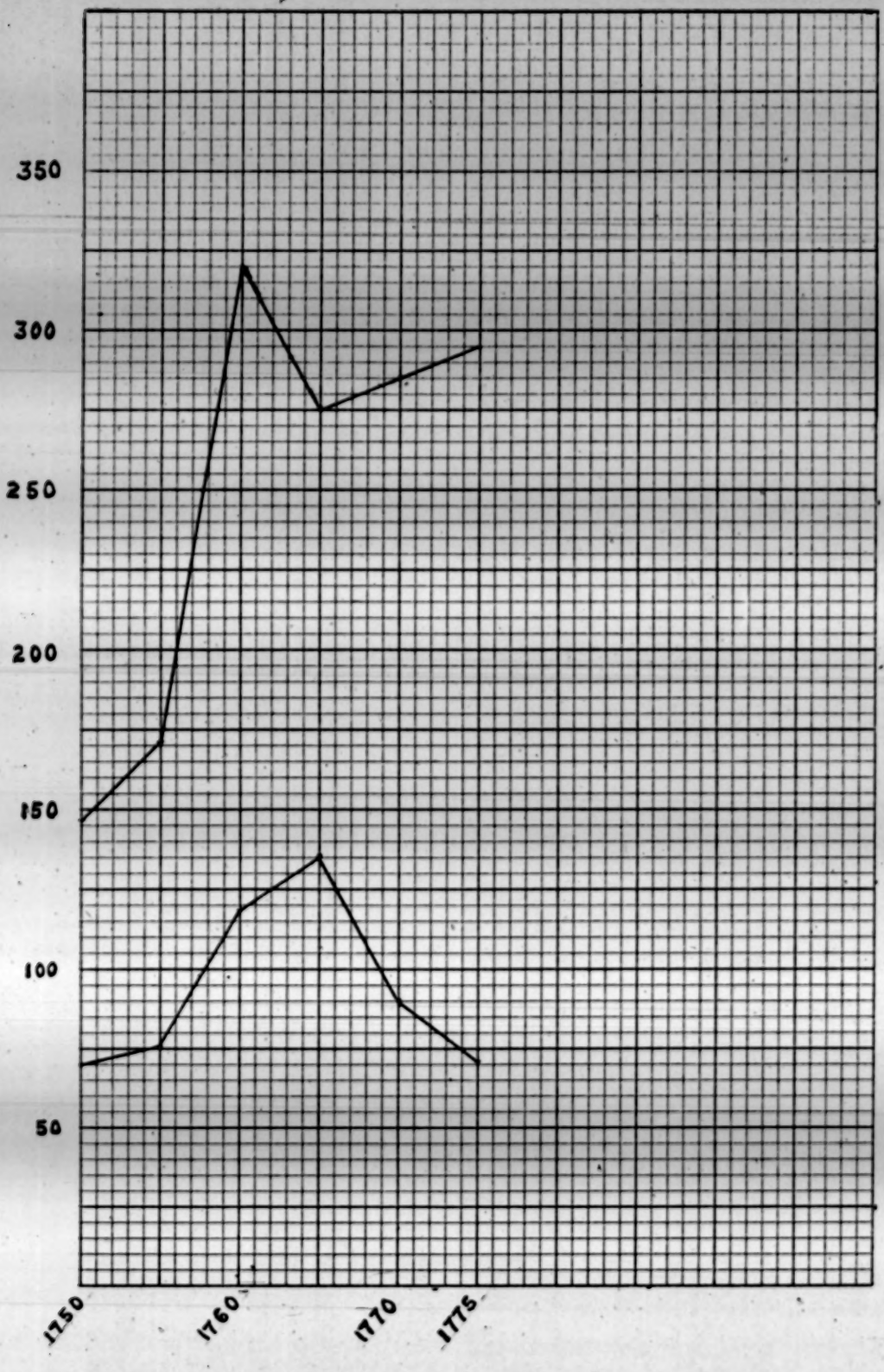
Marriage Offenses



Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (1681-1750)

Total Offenses

1760 Membership: 2,250



Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (1750-1775)

Total Offenses

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (1681-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 341

Radnor Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Total Offenses

Radnor Monthly Meeting (1684-1775)

Marriage Offenses

1760 Membership: 205

Richland Monthly Meeting (1742-1775)

Total Offenses

1760 Membership: 173

Sadsbury Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

Total Offenses

Sadsbury Monthly Meeting (1737-1775)

Marriage Offenses

Uwchlan Monthly Meeting (1763-1775)

Total Offenses

Separated from Goshen Monthly Meeting in 1763.

1760 Membership: 278

Wrightstown Monthly Meeting (1734-1775)

Total Offenses

Wrightstown Monthly Meeting (1734-1775)

Marriage Offenses

Appendix B

Part II

Statistics

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting — 2,250 members in 1760

Offenses recorded	1761-1775 =	855
	1756-1775 =	1,175
Offenders recorded	1761-1775 =	656
	1756-1775 =	885
Disownments recorded	1761-1775 =	366
	1756-1775 =	473

$$\frac{\text{Offenders}}{\text{Offenses}} = \frac{885}{1,175} = \frac{71}{100} \quad (1756\text{-}1775)$$

Per cent of offenders disowned in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting = 52

$$\frac{\text{Offenders}}{\text{Phila. MM population}} = \frac{656}{2,250} = \frac{29}{100} \quad (1761\text{-}1775)$$

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting disowned 16 per cent of its 1760 membership (1761-1775).

Goshen Monthly Meeting — estimated 467 members in 1760

Offenses recorded	1761-1775 =	415
	1756-1775 =	534
Offenders recorded	1761-1775 =	223
	1756-1775 =	314
Disownments recorded	1761-1775 =	150
	1756-1775 =	206

$$\frac{\text{Offenders}}{\text{Offenses}} = \frac{314}{534} = \frac{59}{100} \quad (1756\text{-}1775)$$

Per cent of offenders disowned in Goshen Monthly Meeting = 65

$$\frac{\text{Offenders}}{\text{Goshen MM. population}} = \frac{223}{467} = \frac{48}{100} \quad (1761\text{-}1775)$$

Goshen Monthly Meeting disowned 32 per cent of its 1760 estimated membership (1761-1775).

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Bucks Quarterly Meeting, 1684-1776.

Chester Quarterly Meeting, 1683-1776.

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Abington Monthly Meeting, 1682-1776.

Bradford Monthly Meeting, 1737-1776.

Chester Monthly Meeting, 1681-1776.

Concord Monthly Meeting, 1684-1776.

Darby Monthly Meeting, 1684-1776. (6 month, 1775 through 8 month, 1775 missing)

Exeter Monthly Meeting, 1737-1776.

Falls Monthly Meeting, 1683-1776.

Goshen Monthly Meeting, 1722-1776. (12 month, 1723 through 4 month, 1724; 11 month, 1747 through 5 month, 1748; 5 month and 6 month, 1758; 6 month, 1761 through 4 month, 1762 missing)

Gwynedd Monthly Meeting, 1714-1776. (3 month, 1729 through 3 month, 1730; 12 month, 1743 and 1 month, 1744; 2 month and 3 month, 1748; 11 month, 1755 through 3 month, 1756; 1 month, 1764 through 9 month, 1764 missing)

Middletown Monthly Meeting, 1683-1776.

Newgarden Monthly Meeting, 1718-1776.

Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, 1682-1776.

Radnor Monthly Meeting, 1684-1776. (9 month, 1704 through 10 month, 1712; 2 month, 1718 through 7 month, 1718 missing)

Richland Monthly Meeting, 1742-1776.

Sadsbury Monthly Meeting, 1737-1776.

Uwchlan Monthly Meeting, 1763-1776.

Wrightstown Monthly Meeting, 1734-1776.

Buckingham (Women's) Monthly Meeting, 1722-1776.

Falls (Women's) Monthly Meeting, 1683-1776.

Middletown (Women's) Monthly Meeting, 1683-1776.

Wrightstown (Women's) Monthly Meeting, 1734-1776.

The most complete collection of minutes is on microfilm at Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. Most of the minutes which the Library has on microfilm, and those that it does not have at all, are located, in manuscript, at the Department of Records of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 302 Arch Street, Philadelphia. These two depositories together make available all the above records. The minutes of Buckingham (Men's) Monthly Meeting are not included in the study because their location is unknown.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the men and women held separate meetings for business (Monthly Meetings). In all Monthly Meetings except those in Bucks Quarterly Meeting, the disciplinary actions taken by the women were reported to the men's meetings and entered on their minutes. Because of the exceptional practice in Bucks Quarterly Meeting, the minutes of Buckingham, Falls, Middletown, and Wrightstown Women's Monthly Meetings must be read to complete the disciplinary record.

Three Monthly Meetings--Nottingham, Warrington, and Newark--had constituents from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia and were therefore excluded from this study. The statistics on Pennsylvania Quaker population and delinquency are somewhat less than the real totals because of the exclusion of the Pennsylvania constituents of the above Meetings.

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